



# Oh Bethlehem

## <<<Events>>>

- Sept 4- Communion
- Sept 6- Bible Study with Pastor Eric
- Sept 7- Guest Night here @7pm
- Sept 11- Communion  
Rally Sunday(first day of SS)  
Blessing the farmers.
- Sept 12- Kick Off for Elementary 1G with Picnic
- Sept 12- Council @ 6pm
- Sept 13- Quilting @ 1pm
- Sept 14- Middle School 1G  
Confirmation Starts
- Sept 20- Worship Meeting @ 9:30am

## <<<Bethlehem Ladies>>>

The next study will be on Sept. 6th @ 2pm.  
In the fellowship hall.  
Pastor is still presenting on the book of Philippians.  
Rides are available if you call the church office.  
562-2552. All ladies are invited to join in.

## Making ourselves available...

### September Food Bank

Soups  
Crackers  
Pudding Cups  
Canned Fruit and Veggies  
Instant Mashed Potatoes

Remember the food bank when you have a surplus of fresh produce.

**“Our numbers are increasing, so anything you donate will be helpful. Thank You.**

All donations can be dropped off in the Narthex of the church.

## <<<Greeters and Ushers>>>

### September

- 4 Neely Jensen(c) Family and Jim & Karen Meyering
- 11 Brendan Price(c) Family and Chris Berggren Family
- 18 Dewayne & Bernice Mass and Todd & Lori Corporon
- 25 Brandon Thilges Family and Mike Weaver

### October

- 2 Ashlyn Bechler(c) Family and Brian Blodgett Family
- 9 Pentico Family and Kevin Hagen(c) Family
- 16 Dave & Renee Sachs and Ray & Vonnie Bosma
- 23 Mark & Deb Landheer and Thomas & Amanda Blodgett
- 30 Marty Schaeffer Family and Marlys Dotseth

### Educational Classroom Expansion

HOORAY! We reached our goal and it is so good that we have a committed congregation to see us through our needs here at Bethlehem. **Thank You.**

Our goal is to keep the Project Fund ongoing so that we will be able to address and take care of the unexpected and ongoing care of our church building and parsonage.

This way we are not dipping into our General fund budget. We do budget for Property, but this does not cover bigger expenses that may come about.

God is always working in our church body.  
**We are so Blessed and Thankful.**



**Rachel Hansen**  
Bethlehem  
Lutheran  
Church

"3 Life Lessons I Learned  
on Sick Days with Grandpa."  
Wednesday, September 7  
7:00pm



## GUEST NIGHT

will be here at Bethlehem

Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.

Everyone is welcome! Rachel Hansen will be our guest speaker.

Rachel is a 2005 graduate of NI School.

She is currently working on her masters in Geography and has created some presentations with unique perspectives.

There will be special music and social time for refreshments afterwards.

Plan to join us and welcome Rachel back!

## RALLY SUNDAY!!!

September 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:30  
will be our first day of Sunday School  
A new class will be added,  
It is 3 Year Old Fellowship.  
We are excited for this year.  
We have a great group of teachers.

Confirmation  
will begin on September 14<sup>th</sup>.  
The first Wed, we will meet at 7pm.  
This is for all 7-9<sup>th</sup> graders.



1G is starting up on Monday, Sept 12 after school. It will conclude With a picnic in the park for all families. 1G is for K-5<sup>th</sup> grade. Meets on Mondays after school and walk to the Congregational Church with Volunteers. The activities are music, hearing about Jesus, crafts and lots of fun! Supper is served every session at 5:45.

1G for Middle School/High School meets at the Methodist Church at 2:30 on Wednesdays. For more information talk to Pastor Eric.

## <<confirmation corner>>

### September Confirmation Corner

Who's excited about the fact that it is September? I am because that means Sunday school, 1G and confirmation all start. But for purposes of this little corner of the newsletter, I will highlight "Confirmation". So, here's the upcoming schedule:

Sept 14 – Orientation for parents and students – 7PM

Sept 21 – Church Stations – Acolyte training w/ Pastor Eric, Technology w/ tech team, Worship prep w/ Jen, and Year planning w/ Worship Team

Sept 28 – Worship (Acts 2:42-47)

Oct 5 – Spiritual gifts inventory

Oct 12 – Spiritual gifts explanation

Oct 19 – "As you go..." (Matthew 28:19-20)

Oct 26 – Introduction/1<sup>st</sup> Petition of the Lord's Prayer

Adults, as I said last month, you are welcome to attend any class and sit in for some adult education. Large group teaching will begin by 7:30 each Wednesday.

## <<Pastor Eric>>



This picture appeared on my Facebook wall on August 17. As you can see, that was moving day 2021. We were preparing to leave the life we knew in Western Washington and begin a new chapter in Northern Iowa. There was a lot of anxiety and excitement in the air. Lot's of details to come together and lot's of bumps along the way, but we made it. And now it is one year later. I share this because I want to extent a heart-felt "thank you" to each and everyone of you for the love you have shown me and my family this past year. I also want to thank you for your partnership in the Gospel.

The Women's Bible Study group just finished studying Philippians 1 (we move to chapter 2 this month). In chapter one, Paul begins with the famous greeting: ***"3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."***

Three things stand out to me in this text. First, it is God who formed this partnership over one year ago. It was not a chance meeting or something orchestrated by individuals. God brought us together so He could do a "thing" through us. Second, God began the "good work" in us. He brought us together and HE began doing something. It was not good ideas from individuals, but God did it. And thirdly, God will "bring it to completion".

That which He began over a year ago, God will finish ***at the day of Jesus Christ.***

On August 17, 2021, I had no idea what God was going to do, and I could never have imagined God doing what He did this past year. But God did it and He is still doing it. God is working good works in you and me. God is doing amazing things through Bethlehem Lutheran Church. God is up to something in Buffalo Center, Iowa. In what seemed like an unlikely partnership, God is being glorified. And so I thank you, but more than that, I give thanks to God. I can hardly wait to see what I will write about in September 2023. To God be ALL glory, now and forever, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Your brother in Christ,

*Pastor Eric*

### **Devotional opportunities**

As you have heard, we have a Bible reading Facebook group that has been going since February. I continue to write daily devotions as we are working our way through the New Testament. Currently there are 75 people in this group from Bethlehem and beyond. This is open to anyone. Let me know if you have questions and/or want to join.

Also, there is now another devotional opportunity. On the church website there is a new tab called "Devotions". I am posting short devotional thoughts on scripture that I am reading. This page will be updated a couple times a week. Feel free to share the link or the devotions however you see fit to glorify God.

### **Youth/Children Website page**

This page dedicated to children's and youth ministry is currently under construction. We have some information on it now, but it will be evolving. Keep your eyes peeled and be sure to share this page.

## <<communion>>

Communion is now served on the first and second Sunday of the month. If you know of anyone that is homebound and would like a communion visit, please call the church office. 641-562-2552

## <<education>>

### ***Hello and welcome back!***

Our education year is taking off soon, and I am so excited to see everyone's faces again. There is a lot of planning and execution to do yet, but we will be full steam ahead very soon.

Here's the excitement I am currently buzzing about:

- We have around 60 kids signed up for Sunday School!
- Our Sunday school classroom renovation is nearing its completion.
- Teachers are planning and prepping for class.
- Pastor Eric is preparing for another great year of Confirmation.
- We are working on updating our education stuff on the website.
- There will soon be an education corner in the narthex highlighting kids and teachers, plus what we are up to this year!

We've got irons in lots of fires and will need help all year to continue our programs successes. I will soon be reaching out to parents who have volunteered their time in different ways. Also, I am asking everyone to not only fill a need if you see one, help in an area where your talents lie, but to please pray for the children and teachers as we embark on another great year. Thank you, see you all soon!

LET'S GO FISHING!

***Kelsey Bosma***

## <<cradle roll>>

Our Cradle Roll roster is growing! We currently have 5 children enrolled with more coming in the near future. If you would like to help with Cradle Roll or sponsor a child please contact Cassie Willmert.

A \$100 donation sponsors a child in the program for 3 years.

## <<stewardship>>

Greetings!

As discussed in previous newsletters, there are many facets to Christian Stewardship, and it has been pretty amazing to see how God is working through our church and community.

Financially, our giving is on track, but is borderline. Thank you all so much for your generous giving so far this year. Through the financial giving to our church, we are able to maintain our church building and grounds and all of the essentials. But we are also able to use these gifts to help those in need through various missions (both locally and globally), for fellowship, for opportunities to spread God's word in various ways through our church, community and world, and to help educate our youth.

This fall we are going to take some time to have everyone fill out a Time and Talents form. God bestowed unique talents to each of us. When we all use our time and talents to work together, we can be the church we were created to be. Christian Stewardship is so important in this broken world we are living in. Let the talents God has given shine through you!

***"God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another." ~1 Peter 4:10***

Blessings!

***Patty Hassebroek***

## <<treasurer>>

**Budget for 2022:** \$160,000.00

**YTD Income:** \$96,135.00

## Church Council Meeting Minutes

August 8, 2022 @ 6 pm

\*\*\*held in the meeting room\*\*\*

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

Members present: Pastor Eric, Cassie Willmert, Patty Hassebroek, Derek Thilges, Brandon Thilges, Amy Walk, Kelsey Bosma, Jen McGrady, Kim Ostermann  
Absent: Susan Jensen, Brian Blodgett

Pastor Eric and Connie hosted a BBQ meal for council members and their families. Wonderful food and fellowship was enjoyed by all.

Meeting called to order @ 6:12pm

1. Pastor Eric opened with prayer.
2. The secretaries report with the July minutes was approved via email.  
Motion to approve by Cassie and seconded by Kelsey.
3. Treasurer's Report
  - a. Savings Account: \$3,583.49
  - b. Checking Account: \$1,801.02
  - c. Line of Credit: 0
  - d. Special Projects Account: \$4,157.78

Motion to approve made by Kelsey; seconded by Derek. Approved

4. Committee Reports
  - a. Technology
    - i. Pastor is hearing a little echo with the over the ear microphone. Will check on it or go back to lapel microphone.
  - b. Property
    - i. New signage letters were purchased for the front sign. Landscaper is looking to be available the week of August 8<sup>th</sup>.
    - iii. Carpet is done in the nursery/library. A new wall will be installed between the two rooms. This is part of our Educational Classroom Expansion to help meet the need for additional space for our growing Sunday School. Looking at two 32" pocket doors to make a five foot opening.
    - iv. Pastor would like the old oven removed from the parsonage basement. They would like to put a second refrigerator down there and update the main refrigerator.
    - v. Leak in the boiler room on one of the gaskets. Brandon has made contact to get it fixed.
    - vi. Leak in the preschool/Kindergarten classroom ceiling.
    - vii. Discussion about fixing the sidewalk on the east side of the church. No action at this time.
    - viii. Discussion about weed control.
  - c. Worship
    - i. Worship committee meeting Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup>.
    - ii. Blessing of the backpacks on August 21
    - iii. Baptism is also planned for August 21 for Kenton Kemnitz.
  - d. Stewardship
    - i. We had an anonymous donor along with many others who contributed to the Education Project. The meal that was served following the service on August 7<sup>th</sup> helped us reach the goal. \$4,057.00 has been raised with more still coming in.
    - ii. Discussion about planning for another drive-thru soup supper in October.
  - e. Education

- ii. Vacation Bible School was held August 1-4. This went very well with average attendance at 72 for each night. Bethlehem Lutheran will be the host church for 2023
- iii. Registration for Sunday School is open.
- iv. There will be a 3-year-old toddler class offered this year.
- v. Rally Sunday September 11<sup>th</sup> to kick off the new Sunday School year.
- vi. 1G will kick into gear on September 12<sup>th</sup> for the next school year.
- vii. Confirmation starts September 14<sup>th</sup>.

f. Evangelism / Fellowship

- i. Guest Night is scheduled for Wednesday September 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. Rachel Hansen will be the guest speaker. Special music with Gayle Hansen.
- ii. We would like to send a message out to area farmers wishing them a safe and fruitful harvest. September 11<sup>th</sup> service will have a blessing of the farmers.
- iii. Plans are in the works for a Fall Luncheon on Saturday November 12<sup>th</sup>.
- iv. Amy is looking into renting the Lake Mills movie theater for an upcoming film.
- v. We're thinking of a time to offer a viewing of "The Chosen" at the church. More information to come.
- vi. If you have any ideas regarding activities or speakers that might be of interest to the younger families of our church, please contact Amy or Kim. We would love to reach out and serve those members of our congregation in a way that strengthens their Christian commitment.
- vii. Looking to get a group together to visit area nursing homes.

5. Pastor Report

- 1. Funeral for Karmel Evans
- 2. Our church/Pastor Eric participated in the parade during Bison Days. The community service went well with Larry Gruis preaching, and Pastor Eric presiding. United Methodist also participated. The 3CDs music was enjoyed by all as well as the community sing-along with the Dirksens.
- 3. Ministerial meetings are starting back up again. Pastor Eric will continue serving as president.
- 4. Women's Bible study will move on to Philippians 2 in September.
- 5. Upcoming items for fall include a "Blessing of the Backpacks" service on August 21<sup>st</sup>. 1G starts again in September, and pastor is working on Confirmation plans which will fall on Reformation Sunday, Oct. 30.
- 6. Timely Mission Nursing Home is having worship services on Sundays at 1:30pm. Pastor Eric will rotate duties with five other pastors.
- 7. There will be a new devotional page coming on the website.
- 8. Pastor is registered for the national LCMC gathering the first week of October.

6. Office Report –

7. Old Business

8. New Business

- a. August Mission: local -- 1G Network (regular rotation is LCMC, local, global.)  
Motion made by Amy; seconded by Kelsey -- approved

9. Additional Comments/concerns/questions: Executive Council will meet with pastor for a review of how things went during the initial year.

10. Next meeting: Monday, September 12

11. Newsletter deadline: Friday, August 26

13. Motion to Adjourn made by Patty; seconded by Derek  
Meeting adjourned at 7:28pm

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,  
**Kim Ostermann**, Secretary



Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
201 4<sup>th</sup> St. NW  
Buffalo Center, IA 50424

**"FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE make us available  
for our neighbors near and far."**

FIND US ON FACEBOOK  
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