



Oh Bethlehem

<<<Events>>>

Aug 6- Bridal Shower for Natalie Sachs
Aug 7- Outdoor Worship/Communion
SS Registration with a fundraiser
meal to follow.
Aug 8- Council meets @6pm
Aug 14- Communion
Aug 15- Worship meets@8:30am
Aug 21- Backpack Blessing
Sept 4-Communion

Bridal Shower for Natalie Sachs,
Bride-elect of Ryan Bettinga
Join us on Saturday
August 6th
10-11:30am in the fellowship hall.
The couple is registered at
Amazon, Target, and Walmart.

Making ourselves available...

August Food Bank

Canned Meat, Cereal, Juice, Canned Fruit and Veggies, Cake Mix, Brownie Mix, Crackers and Packaged Cookies.

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>>>

August

7 Duane Cooper Family and Jesse Bosma Family
14 Derek Olson Family and Denny & Dawn Meinders
21 Rande & Mary Geisking and Derek & Shelby Thilges
28 Ted & Darla Thompson and William & Marge Becker

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

<<<Bethlehem Ladies>>>

The next study will be on Sept. 6th @ 2pm.
Everyone is welcome.

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.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES DONATIONS

We will take donations from now until Sept. 21st for School supplies to help out our classrooms and teachers at North Iowa Elementary.

A list will be available at church. You can drop them off here in the Narthex at church. THANKS!!!



**YOU'RE INVITED!
GUEST NIGHT
Wed., Sept. 7
7:00pm**

GUEST NIGHT will be hosted at Bethlehem Lutheran Church on Wednesday, September 7th at 7:00pm. Everyone is welcome! Rachel Hansen will be our guest speaker. Rachel is a 2005 graduate of North Iowa School. She is currently working on her masters in Geography and has

created some presentations with unique perspectives on the world around her. There will be special music and social time for refreshments afterwards. Please plan to join us and welcome Rachel back!



We are approaching our second year with our 1G Youth Group. We gather every Monday starting on Sep. 12th, after school with the K-5th grades for music, lessons, activities, and a meal. At 5:30 the families are invited to join their child for the meal. All family members are invited. On Wed. starting, Sept 14th, after school the middle schoolers meet and have fellowship and fun. Elementary meets at the Congregational Church and the Middle School at the Methodist Church. If you have any questions, please call our office at 562-2552

<<Pastor Eric>>

How did August arrive so quickly? Didn't the kids just finish school the other day? But, as it stands, they are getting ready to start school in a few short weeks, and with that many things are starting up here and a couple new things taking place. Allow me to give you a brief run down:

- (1) Sunday, August 21, during worship, will be the **Blessing of the Backpacks**. Kids are invited to bring their backpacks to worship for a special blessing and a small gift to display on them.
- (2) Sunday, September 11 will be **Rally Sunday**. We are excited to welcome the kiddos back to another year of growing deeper in our relationship with Jesus.
- (3) **1G kicks off** on Monday, September 12 at the Congregational Church. It is the same nightly routine, 3:30 to 5:30, with a family supper at 5:30 PM. This year we are focusing on New Testament stories.
- (4) **Confirmation** starts Wednesday, September 14. Lots of new and exciting changes happening. Pay special attention to a new feature in this newsletter, "Confirmation Corner", for an **adult education opportunity**.
- (5) **New member classes** – If you are or know of someone interested in church membership, be on the lookout for membership classes to be scheduled this coming year.
- (6) A NEW **devotional page** on our church website is under construction. It is scheduled to go live on Monday, September 12. My plan is to refresh the page a couple times a week with new devotions. This is still in the planning stage so stay tuned for more information.
- (7) The **LCMC Annual Gathering is in Lakeville, MN** this year at Hosanna Church, October 2-5. A short 125 miles from here. Anyone is welcome to attend and let me tell you, it will be well worth your time. Let me know if you have any questions about this or you can visit the LCMC website for a schedule, information and registration at: lcmc.net/annual-gathering

So, are you excited yet? I definitely am. God is doing a thing here at Bethlehem Lutheran Church and in Buffalo Center. Remember to pray, pray and pray some more and hang on for the Holy Spirit ride. To God be ALL the glory, Amen.

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Eric

<<confirmation corner>>

Welcome to the first installment of Confirmation Corner. **PLEASE DON'T LEAVE** just because you are not a confirmation parent. **This corner is for ALL of you.** Allow me to explain. This year I am doing something a little different. I am going to open the confirmation teaching time each Wednesday to anyone who would like to "audit" a class. [*What in the world are you talking about, Pastor?*] Well, in some colleges, you are allowed to audit a class for free. You can sit in on the lectures and do the work but for no credit. Here at Bethlehem, adults are welcome to come to the Fellowship Hall, sit in the back and listen in to the large group confirmation teaching time for your own spiritual enrichment. You can do the memory work and worship notes if you would like but I am not going to chase you down and bug you about it. Each month I will report here what is coming up for classes so you can prepare. Intrigued? I hope so. Here is what is coming up:

Sept 14 – Orientation

Sept 21 – Stations – Acolyte training w/ Pastor Eric, Technology w/ Brian or Kyle, Worship prep w/ Jen, and Year planning w/Megan and Lorie

Sept 28 – Worship (Acts 2:42-47)

Oct 5 – Lord's Prayer (Introduction and 1st Petition)

And we will continue in the Lord's Prayer until Thanksgiving. Classes begin at 7:15 PM and large group time begins at 7:30 PM. Hope to see you some Wednesday night. No registration required. Just show up and learn.0.

*****We remember the family of our church member, Karmel Evans*** as she went to be with the Lord this past month.
*****It is a pleasure to welcome Miles John Thilges into our church family through Holy Baptism.*** Miles' parents are Shelby and Derek Thilges. To God Be The Glory!

<<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>>

Happy August everyone!

We have lots of excitement coming up as we head towards the beginning of our education year at church.

We start off with.....

Registration day for Sunday School and a Fundraiser...August 7th

Backpack blessings...August 21st

Rally Sunday, September 11th, with the addition of a 3-year-old Fellowship hour, also at 10:45.

First night confirmation, Wed. September 14th.

I am looking forward to, but also anxious, to get the year rolling. Our programs have grown and are turning out to be so successful. With that, we have the need for more space obviously, but I also really need some more people to join our teams! I would love to see more of the younger parents getting involved so that we aren't always relying on the same handful of people, but also learning and growing so that we can start "relieving" some of the people in our congregation that have certainly put in their time already! We are so thankful they have a servant heart and continue to help, but time for more people to step up- please! There are many ways to help, so please reach out and we can talk.

I hope everybody continues to enjoy the end of their summer, and I cannot wait to start seeing all of you back at church.

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.

<<<Giving>>>

Giving can be done easily online, right from your phone or computer. We have had great success this last year with weekly offering coming right into our General Fund at the bank. This is an easy and convenient option, check it out today! www.bethlehemlutheranbc.com/giving
If you would like more information or guidance on setting this up, please see Brian Blodgett or Jen McGrady.

<<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.

I want to focus on the last one for a minute...educating our youth. We have an exciting "problem" at Bethlehem Lutheran. We are running out of space for all of the youth enrolled in Sunday School! Our church council has been working together to find a solution for this. We are going to be doing some renovations with the main focus being on the nursery. Proposed plans are to put a wall up in the room, with a pocket door, to give us 2 spaces yet allow for access to both rooms when needed. We also hope to update the carpet in the room. There are a few other ideas in the works as well, which will depend on how much we are able to raise. These improvements and updates will allow our facility to be more available for Sunday School, future programs and hosting VBS next year among other things. We have titled this campaign **Educational Classroom Expansion**. Our goal is 4000.00. We need your help to complete this goal and make the needed updates. Please write your checks to Bethlehem Lutheran Church and include "Educational Classroom Expansion", "Classroom project", or something similar in the memo.

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



Educational Classroom Expansion We are running out of space for all the youth enrolled in Sunday School! Our church council has been working together to find a solution for this. We are going to be doing some renovations with the focus being on the nursery. Proposed plans are to put a wall up in the room, with pocket doors, to give us 2 spaces yet allow for access to both rooms when needed. We also hope to update the carpet in the room. These improvements and updates will allow us to be more available for Sunday School, ongoing and future programs.

Our goal is 4000.00.

We need your help to complete this goal and make the needed updates. Please write your checks to Bethlehem Lutheran Church and indicate "Classroom project".

Thank You.

<<treasurer>>

Giving so far 46% of budget. (**Budgeted for 2022: 160,000 YTD: 74,000**)

We are 58% through the year.

<<technology>>

Technology at Bethlehem has been progressing nicely over the last 2 years.

First I would like to thank several that have given of their times, talents, and finances to help .

Things we have done the last few years include with these efforts include:

- Had almost 12,000 views of our services and messages. We are providing the word to our community near and far.
- Ability to present in or hear services in the fellowship hall.
- Upgrades to the sanctuary sound system and microphones
- Upgrades to the equipment needed to broadcast outdoor services
- Ability to do virtual and hybrid meetings in the meeting room
- Shared file system to allow groups to collaborate on documents simultaneously

There are many other technology related items that have substantially improved efficiency and access. If you have questions about any of these, would like some training to us (for example the meeting room), or would have interest in helping run these during events please reach out to Brian Blodgett.

Thank you
Brian Blodgett

<<property>>

It has been another busy year on the property committee! We have had projects that Need to be done and projects that we Want to get done. To keep everybody updated: We have replaced the sink/plumbing in the kitchen bathroom. (Had a leak)

We had an A/C unit installed in Jen's office.

There is a small water leak off the old original pipes in the boiler room that needs addressed before cold temps which is already in the plan.

We are also working on fundraising and designing the new Sunday school room.

We need new dead bolt door locks in the parsonage—thinking about just hiring someone to buy and install unless someone from the congregation would be interested. If so, Please call Brandon or Derek 641-430-5101.

Thank You,
Brandon Thilges

Thermostat

Please do not touch the thermostat for the heat/cooling system units in the Sanctuary. While turning the units off when we are not using the Sanctuary may seem helpful, it does more harm than good.

Turning off the units does not save us money.

Have you noticed how warm it has been on Sunday mornings this summer? People have been turning off the units. Luckily, we have a pastor who comes to church early on Sunday mornings and checks the units first thing to make sure they are on. Unfortunately, they still do not always have the time needed to cool such a large space. We spent a lot of money on these units, it would be nice to have a comfortable, dehumidified space when we need it. Did you know units use more energy trying to cool the space on Sunday morning than maintain a constant temperature? It is also more taxing on the units to be used intensively for short periods of time. Turning off the units is also harmful to our instruments, our equipment, and our building. The fluctuation in temperature and humidity can damage these things and cause us problems in the future. If you would like to help the church save money, please make sure the doors to the Sanctuary are closed as much as possible. If you have any questions, please talk to a Church Council member.

Thank you,
Cassie Willmert

July Council Meeting held 7-18-22 in meeting room.
Faith, hope, and love make us available for our neighbors near and far.

Members present: Pastor Eric, Cassie Willmert, Brian Blodgett, Derek Thilges, Brandon Thilges, Amy Walk, Jen McGrady, Kim Ostermann

Absent: Patty Hassebroek, Kelsey Bosma, Susan Jensen

Meeting called to order @ 6:05

1. Pastor Eric opened with prayer and devotional.
2. The secretaries report with the June minutes was approved via email.
Motion to approve by Patty and seconded by Cassie.

3. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Savings Account: \$6583.49
 - b. Checking Account: \$2079.34
 - c. Line of Credit: 0
 - d. Special Projects Account: \$350

Motion to approve made by Derek; seconded by Brandon.

4. Committee Reports
 - a. Technology
 - i. Estimate of \$1,000 to purchase headsets for hearing impaired members of the congregation so they can hear the service better. There won't be any action on this unless there is interest in pursuing within our strategic plan or if there is an interest via any donors.
 - ii. The cordless microphone for Pastor is better after Brian worked with it.
 - b. Property
 - i. Work continues to find the best option for door locks on the parsonage.
 - ii. New signage letters were purchased for the front sign. Landscaper will give a week's notice to remove old landscaping before new is installed.
 - iii. Carpeting will be replaced 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.
 - 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. The bathroom sink/faucet located in the church kitchen has been replaced.
 - vi. Window air conditioner was installed in the church secretary office.
 - vii. Leak in the boiler room on one of the gaskets. Brandon has made contact to get it fixed.
 - c. Worship
 - i. Worship committee met July 18th.
 - ii. Bison Days will have a community service on July 31st which we are participating in. Pastor Eric will pre-record a devotional with some music before and after so there will still be a YouTube feed on our Bethlehem Lutheran Church Channel.
 - iii. Outdoor communion will be offered at the outdoor service on August 7th.
 - d. Stewardship
 - i. Thank you to Patty for the write-up in the last newsletter regarding our newest financial campaign "Educational Classroom Expansion". We are trying to utilize every corner of the church in the most efficient way to accommodate our growing Sunday School. Our goal is \$4,000 to fund these changes. Please consider a donation to the project by noting Classroom Project in the memo of your checks.
 - ii. Bison Days Fundraiser is Root Beer Floats at Lions Park on Friday evening.
 - iii. Education fundraiser on August 7th Pulled Pork Meal right after church.
 - iv. Time and Talents form will be coming this fall.

e. Education

- i. One God Network summer picnic was a success. Around 120 people from the community were served hotdogs, bratwurst, chips, watermelon, and bars.
- ii. Vacation Bible School is August 1-4 at First Reformed Church. Registration is open. We are still looking for more helpers.
- iii. Registration for Sunday School will be on August 7th following the church service.
- iv. Rally Sunday September 11th to kick off the new Sunday School year.

f. Evangelism / Fellowship

- i. Guest Night is scheduled for Wednesday September 7th 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. We're also considering a "Blessing of the tractors" service this fall. Let Amy or Kim know if you have a tractor you would consider bringing to church on this Sunday to represent our farming community. We're looking at September 11th for this service.
- iii. Plans are in the works for a Fall Luncheon on Saturday November 12th.
- iv. Amy is looking into renting the Lake Mills movie theater for an upcoming film.
- v. We're also 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.

5. Pastor Report

1. LCMC Annual Gathering registration is open. It will be at Hosanna Church in Lakeville, MN this year Oct. 2-5. The price goes up in August, so Pastor Eric wants to get the registration in.
2. Pastor shared happenings over the past month. Two baptisms in July and one coming up in August. We had Shirley Myers funeral in July.
3. A community church service will be offered during Bison Days. Larry Gruis is preaching, and Pastor Eric is presiding. United Methodist is also participating.
4. Upcoming items for fall include a "Blessing of the Backpacks" service on August 21st. 1G starts again in September, and pastor is working on Confirmation plans which will fall on Reformation Sunday, Oct. 30.
5. Timely Mission Nursing Home is starting worship services on Sundays at 1:30pm. Pastor Eric will rotate duties with five others, and will be kicking things off Sunday, July 24th.

6. Office Report – Bethlehem is providing the bulletin for the Community Service

7. Old Business

8. New Business

- a. July Mission: LCMC (regular rotation is LCMC, local, global.)
Motion made by Brian; seconded by Derek

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

10. Next meeting: August 8th – 6:00pm Pastor is inviting council for a BBQ before the meeting.

11. Newsletter deadline: July 25th

13. Motion to Adjourn made by Brian; seconded by Brandon
Meeting adjourned at 7:19pm

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,
Kim Ostermann
Secretary



Bethlehem Lutheran Church
201 4th St. NW
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**"FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE make us available
for our neighbors near and far."**

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