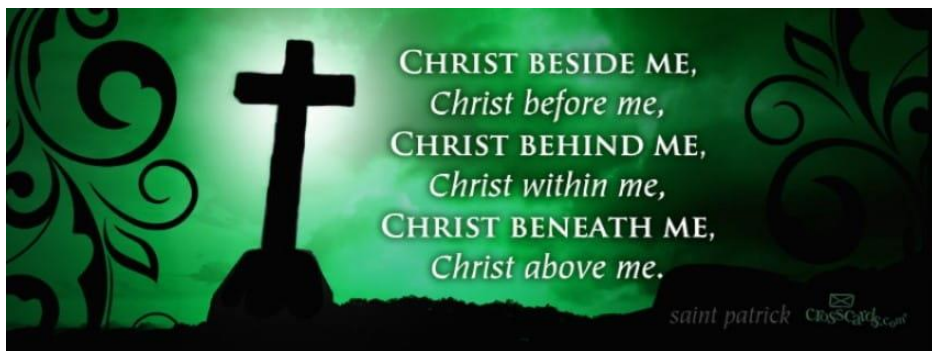


**Faith, hope, and love...
make us available for our neighbors near and far.**

March 2022



Oh Bethlehem

<<<Events>>>

March

- 6/13-Communion Sundays
Communion Class for 5-7th graders @10:45.
- 13-Okoboji Camp Staff
- 8-Quilting @9am with Coffee fellowship
- 9/16/23/30--Lent Meals @6pm...Lent Services @7pm.(Wednesdays)
- 22-Quilting@9am with Coffee fellowship
- 27-SS kids Sing
- Riverside Camp Staff visit

Making ourselves available...

Food Bank Needs for March

- Canned fruits
- Soups
- Salad Dressing
- Bar Soaps
- Shampoo
- Kleenex
- All donations can be dropped off in the Narthex of the church. Thank You!*

<<<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.

<<<Bethlehem Ladies>>>

**We will gather on Tues.
April 5th @ 2pm for Bible study,
meeting, and fellowship.
Hope to see you there!
Rides are available if you call the
church office. 562-2552**

Do you have availability to sit and enjoy the company of others and to visit with your friends?
To enjoy coffee and great treats?
Do you want to be available to those around you and fill your time with service work for God?

YES!

You are invited to join the quilting group. You can take part in a couple different ways, sewing and or tying quilts.
There will always be someone to help you learn and or get started.
Come and join us on Tues March 8th @ 9am.
In the fellowship hall.

Council Members 2022

President.....	Cassie Willmert
V President.....	Amy Walk
Secretary.....	Kim Ostermann
Treasurer.....	Brian Blodgett
Education.....	Kelsey Bosma
Evangelism/Fellowship.....	Amy Walk
	Kim Ostermann
Worship.....	Susan Jensen
Property.....	Brandon Thilges
	Derek Thilges
Stewardship.....	Patty Hassebroek

<<Pastor Eric>>

By the time you read this we will be off and running in the season of Lent. For some, Lent is a season to engage in a new spiritual discipline. Often that spiritual discipline is giving something up (i.e. chocolate, snacking). I have even heard of people giving up coffee for Lent (Why in the world would anyone do that). And while all of that is perfectly fine, except the giving up coffee thing 😊, the question that arises for me is this – “Why? For example, giving up snacking for Lent could very well produce some healthy turn-around from which you would greatly benefit. Maybe the decrease in high calorie snacks leads to some weight loss and thus getting into some clothes you have not worn for a while. Maybe it allows you to reduce or get rid of a particular medication. Whatever the case, the so-called “spiritual discipline” is not really a “spiritual” discipline then but rather a physical discipline wearing a spiritual mask.

Now do not get me wrong here. I am not criticizing anyone for giving something up for Lent, just the motivation for doing so. For you see, the giving something up for Lent is not meant to be a selfish thing to benefit you in the here and now, but rather draw you closer to the Lord. It is a time to refocus your attention to listen to the Lord and depend upon him for your provision. There are many things that get in the way of our relationship with Jesus. There are times of spiritual dryness. There is a drifting away from the One. The giving up of something can serve as a reminder to re-evaluate that relationship and to focus on God. For example, as you long for the nighttime snack that you gave up, those cravings could be a reminder to pray or read your Bible, etc.

But allow me to challenge you with something else. Instead of giving something up, take something on. *What do you mean by that, Pastor?* Well, instead of giving up chocolate, add the discipline of daily Bible reading (i.e. You could join the Bible reading Facebook group). Add the discipline of praying first thing in the morning and maybe even start a prayer journal. Commit to turning off the TV at night and meditate on scripture. And those are just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Instead of using Lent for veiled selfish reasons, use it to strengthen/deepen your relationship with the Father through Jesus. If giving something up helps strengthen that relationship with God, then do that. Whatever the case, glorify God and get to know Him all over again.

Have blessed Lenten season 😊

Pastor Eric

1G Network Youth Ministry is happening in our community.

There is a lot of planning and implementation with the area Churches, NICS and Ministerial Assoc. as they continue to launch this exciting after school event. This is for elementary and Middle School. They meet after school on Mondays and Wednesdays. There is a meal served on Mon. evenings for students, families, and volunteers. These events take place at the Congregational and Methodist Churches. The meal is open to all families and volunteers.

We ask that you consider helping in ways of donations for snacks and meals and any monetary donations when it is our week to serve, also volunteering to help with the students and lastly praying for this ministry, the adult and the kids.

We give glory to God for being “Available to those around us”.

March newsletter tidbits

First Communion classes will be held on Sundays March 6 and 13 during the Sunday school time for 5th, 6th and 7th graders. They will meet with me (Pastor Eric) in the conference room. Students will then receive their First Communion at the Maundy Thursday worship service, April 14 at 7 PM. If this does not work for you, please let me know so other arrangements can be made. I will also be covering Communion information during confirmation classes on March 9 and March 16. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Lent 2022: I am so looking forward to spending this Lenten season with you all. It has been a couple years since things were somewhat “normal”. So here is a quick run down of what is coming up:

- ~ Ash Wednesday worship on March 2 at 7 PM with imposition of ashes and Holy Communion.
- ~ For the following five Wednesdays (March 9, 16, 23, 30 & April 6) there will be a **Lenten supper at 6 PM** followed by **worship at 7 PM**. I will be preaching/teaching through the book of Jonah. There is more to Jonah that you may realize.
- ~ Community Maunday Thursday worship on April 14 with Holy Communion will be here at Bethlehem. There will also be First Communion for the 5th, 6th and 7th graders. Worship is at 7 PM.
- ~ Community Good Friday worship on April 15 is hosted by the United Methodist Church of Buffalo Center. Worship is at 7 PM
- ~ Easter schedule: Sunrise worship at 7 AM, Easter breakfast from 8 to 9:15 AM, and Easter festival worship at 9:30 AM. Holy Communion at both services.

If you have any questions about what is coming up, please contact the church office. To God be the glory!

<<treasurer>>

Current offering since the beginning of the year is \$13,071 or 8.2% towards are budget. We are currently 15% through the year. We have a great thing happening here at Bethlehem, but it does require continued gifts to do this.

Thank you
Brian Blodgett

The shortage of blood is real. **YOU can help save a life!** Buffalo Center will have a community blood drive on March 17, 2022 from 1:00 – 6:00pm at the Heritage Town Center. Appointments are encouraged in order to maintain social distancing and to make sure your wait time is minimal. Sign up for an appointment online at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive> and use the Sponsor Code BuffaloCenterIA. You may also call the Red Cross for an appointment: 1-800-733-2767.

Don't Wait. Give Blood Now.



Greeters and Ushers

March

- *13 Brendan Price(c) Family and Jim & Karen Meyering
- 20 Tim Weaver Family and Todd & Lori Corporon
- 27 Rande & Mary Geisking and Mike Weaver

April

- *3 Ashlyn Bechler(c) Family and Marty Schaeffer Family
- *10 Pentico Family and Kevin Hagen(c) Family
- 17 Dave & Renee Sachs & Ray & Vonnie Pilgrim
- 24 Brian Blodgett Family and Thomas & Amanda Blodgett

Cradle Roll

Are you expecting a new addition to your family? Do you know someone who is? Enroll them in our new Cradle Roll program! The Cradle Roll is a ministry for expectant families and children 0 to 3 years old in our church and community. To enroll someone in the Cradle Roll, sponsor a child, or join the ministry team, contact Cassie Willmert at cassandra.willmert@gmail.com.

2021 Cradle Roll Roster

Emma Thilges, Drew Angstman,
and Kenton Kemnitz

Welcome to the Bethlehem Family!!

Church Council Meeting Minutes

February 21, 2022 @ 6 pm *** held in the meeting room***

Members present: Pastor Eric Hullstrom, Cassie Willmert, Brian Blodgett, Brandon Thilges, Derek Thilges, Amy Walk, Patty Hassebroek, Kim Ostermann

Absent: Susan Jensen, Kelsey Bosma

Meeting called to order @ 6:03pm

1. Opened with Pastor Eric sharing a devotion from Hebrews and prayer.
2. Old Business
 - a. January minutes approved via email. Motion to approve by Kelsey; seconded by Kim.
3. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Savings Account \$ 3581
 - b. Checking Account \$ 3341
 - c. Motion to approve by: Amy Walk seconded by: Derek Thilges
4. Committee Reports
 - a. Technology – Brian reported that the clicker has been installed for pastor to use during services. Kyle Winter is covering the technology for most of the services with Logan Willmert and Thomas Blodgett assisting at times.
 - b. Property
 - i. Looking for keys for the parsonage front door dead bolt. The decision made to change out the dead bolt lock.
 - ii. Flickering lights in the parsonage bathroom. Logan Willmert will look at the issue and determine if a licensed electrician is required for the job.
 - iii. The office received additional memorial money for cleaning up the sign out front. We need to determine what the expectations are and how much money has been designated to this project.
 - c. Worship
 - i. Updates from Worship committee meeting 2/15
Ash Wednesday is March 2nd with Holy Communion and imposition of ashes.
Working on some exciting ideas for Holy Week and Easter. Two services will be held for Easter. First one at 7:00am – second one at 9:30am with a breakfast in between services.
 - ii. Communion Schedule will be developed. For now, these council members are scheduled to assist.
 - I. March: Kelsey & Cassie
 - II. April: Brian & Kim
 - d. Stewardship
Patty Hassebroek is looking to see how she can best work in this capacity. Time and talents are as important as financial giving.
 - e. Education
 - i. Sunday School kids singing on 2/27
 - ii. Update on Community Youth Group – 1G Network is going well. Students are having a good time. Nice to see so many churches involved. Many talented people have stepped up to make things WORK! 49 pre-registered. 33 the first week, and at least that many the second week. Different students showing up as well.
 - iii. Education is heading up Lenten meals – Kelsey is scheduling
Two evenings will be soup, one is goulash, one is scalloped potatoes and ham
6:00pm meal prior to the 7:00 service.
 - f. Fellowship
 - i. Congregational "Thank you" meal scheduled for 2/27. This is the council's way of thanking the congregation for your support. The meal will be served following church service at about 11:00am.
Pork loin, corn, pasta salad, chips, and dessert
 - ii. Serving schedule.....Amy and Kim will get together to see what will work the best.

- g. Evangelism
 - i. Update on The Chosen Bible study
Amy is working on having a couple of different sessions. Books are \$17 and available from Amy Walk or the office.
 - ii. Blood Drive is planned for March 17th 1:00-6:00 at the Heritage Center. Kim will be assisting Rachelle Gruis to promote this Red Cross event.

5. Pastor Report

- a. Pastor Eric gave an update on the 1G Network – going well.
- b. Reading the Bible Facebook Group was started Feb. 1st by reading through the Gospel of Mark. Have now started on the book of Hebrews.
- c. Getting more comfortable using PowerPoint slides where he navigates them with a clicker during his sermon – thanks to tech people for adjusting.
- d. Plans for lent: Ash Wednesday on March 2, five Wednesday Lenten services with Jonah as the preaching series
- e. Alice LaMont funeral was Feb. 5.
 - I. Pastor and Jen are asking for a training on basic technology that can be used at times like this for sharing PowerPoints and videos on the TVs.
- f. First Communion classes will be March 6 and 13. 5th, 6th, and 7th graders will receive their First Communion on Maundy Thursday.
- g. Pastor is redesigning his office to give it a more open and welcome feel for people to come and talk and to be heard. He would like to remove the big table/desk extension and add a couple comfortable sitting chairs and a small round table.

6. Office Report

- a. The newsletter deadline is February 25th. Put it in the bulletin and open it up to the congregation for content. Be sure to contact Jen about anything you wish to share.
Congregational opportunity to share about things happening in the church. Discussed the possibility of sharing faith stories. Email: office@blciowa.org
We have new membership submissions.

7. New Business

- a. February Mission (January was LCMC, regular rotation is LCMC, local, global)
February benevolence will go to Riding Light Ministry
- b. Ministry Plan meeting
 - i. Look at breaking up the Ministry Plan by Strategic vs. Tactical
Have an executive meeting to discuss this plan to make it more navigable. Strategically – where are we going. Tactical – how do we get there?

8. Additional Comments/concerns/questions

- a. TV feed in social hall. The funeral committee would like to hear the message.
Brian will work on getting audio feed in the social hall.
- b. Quick overview/explanation of SharePoint. This is used by the Church Council and the church office to easily share documents in one location.

9. Important upcoming dates

- a. 2/27 Thank you meal – Council Serving, spouses encouraged to help
- b. 2/26 LCMC District Leadership Conference 9:00am-3:00pm @ Ellsworth, IA – Pastor will be attending.
- c. 3/2 Ash Wednesday – 7:00pm service

10. Schedule next meeting: March 14, 2022 @ 6:00pm

11. Motion to Adjourn

- a. Motion made by: Patty Hassebroek
- b. Seconded by: Amy Walk

12. Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Meeting adjourned @ 7:21pm

Secretary,

Kim L. Ostermann



Bethlehem Lutheran Church
201 4th 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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