

NOVEMBER 2025



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

- *2 Wyatt Olson Family and Dana & Katy Greensky
- *9 Khloe & Colson Wubben Family and Beckett Jensen Family
- 16 Leighton Lawson Family & Mayah Hullstrom Family
- 23 Aurora & Lily Pentico Family
- 30 Brant Boekelman Family and Kyle Frerichs Family

DECEMBER

- *7 Aubri Wubben Family and Amelia Price Family
- *14 Elsa Adams Family and Tracy & Jodi Adams
- 21 Deegan Schroeder Family and Grant Jacobs Family
- *24 Julian Ernster Family & Brayden Berggren Family
- 28 Julie Weaver, Colin Weaver, and Tanner & Anne Weaver

Prayers for our Members & Friends

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Jaya Fever | Carolyn Bartz |
| Brian Bashans | Karen Buss |
| Christina Coughlin | Deloris Steffensen |
| Emily Schulz | Claire Rustemier-Hinz |
| Roger Burnside | Joy Albert |
| Emmagine Silber | Harlan Melz |
| Virginia Cooper | Leroy Weaver |
| Penny Mitchell | Curtis Vaudt |
| Charlie Schaefer | Shirley Hagenson |
| Dawn Jensvold | Jason Christensen |
| Joan Sunde | |
| Pastor Mark Neumann (BLC's deployed pastor) | |

CALENDAR of EVENTS

Please see the monthly calendar on [page 9](#)
for all church activities this month.



Birthdays for the month of November:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1- Wyatt Bosma | 11 - Berneice Maass |
| 2 - Adler Jacobs | 12 - Julie Weaver |
| 2 - Clare Jacobs | 13 - Karen Buss |
| 2 - Tanner Weaver | 14 - Kenton Kemnitz |
| 3 - Ryder Paul | 15 - Avery Hartman |
| 3 - Mackenzie Willmert | 15 - Tenley Hartman |
| 4 - Patty Hassebrook | 19 - Lydia Boekelman |
| 4 - Charlie Schaefer | 21 - Tessa Holland |
| 5 - Rande Giesking | 22 - Connie Hanson-Hullstrom |
| 7 - Megan Holland | 23 - Amelia Price |
| 7 - Carolyn Bartz | 25 - Shirley Hagenson |
| 8 - Khloe Wubben | 25 - Glenda Sapp |
| 9 - Nicole Baumann | 26 - Renae Sachs |
| 10 - Bill Becker | 30 - Harley Hassebrook |
| 10 - Randy Melz | |

Bethlehem Lutheran

Turkey Dinner

Sunday, Nov 16

11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Smoked Turkey, Vegetable,
Salad Bar, Dessert, Beverages

Freewill Donation

We've started a "Make a Difference"
Campaign. See more details on [page 4](#)!

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



On Reformation Sunday, I preached on Psalm 46. I have a lot of favorite Psalms, but this one definitely ranks up there. The fact that God is our mighty and strong fortress is of great comfort to me. No matter how hard or long the big, bad wolf huffs and puffs, he will never shake the mighty fortress that is our God. And then we get to verse ten. After reading these promises throughout this Psalm and about the majesty of our awesome God, God commands us to "Be still and know that I am God...". And I need this command, each and every day. I mean, think about it. How often do you take the time to stop what you are doing, shut off your phone, move away from your computer and just be still, reflecting on the fact that God is God almighty, especially as the waters roar and foam and the mountains tremble at its swelling. How often do you just stop and be still when you are in trouble or are you the one who has to power through and try to figure things out on your own? Are you the one who, when the big, bad wolf huffs and puffs, retreats into a kingdom of your own making, self-help tips to help you endure hard times? God is not giving us a suggestion here. God is COMMANDING us to stop, and to remember who he is. This is not a threat but rather a promise and Good News. Through Jesus Christ, you have a refuge in which the big, bad wolf will never touch or hurt you. You have a home where you will be at peace forever. You have a God that will be your life for all eternity. So, wherever you are this day, STOP. Be still and know that God IS God, now and forever. Amen!



Our confirmation class has been studying the Lord's Prayer and will do so through the end of this calendar year. There will be no class on November 26 due to Thanksgiving Eve worship, which will be held at First Reformed Church, 7 PM. A big thank you to all the parents who have provided snacks this year. The students truly appreciate it. Please continue praying for these students and the adult leaders.



Reformation Sunday was also Confirmation Sunday! On October 26, Gabrielle Andersen, Norah Blodgett, and Tate Engelbarts affirmed their baptism before the congregation. Congratulations! May God's blessings be with you as you continue your journey with Him.



Upcoming Events to Remember:

Dec 7 - Abram Neumann Preaching during Worship

Dec 14 - Buffalo Center Tour of Lights

Dec 21 - Sunday School Christmas Program, 9:30 am

Christmas will be here before we know it—and with that, comes The Giving Tree!

We will be taking donations for hats, mittens, and scarves again this year. We will have a tote set up in the narthex. The deadline for donations will be Dec 15.



General Fund Giving (As of 10.29.25)

Actual YTD:
\$104,397

Budgeted YTD:
\$133,239

YTD Deficit:
- \$28,842

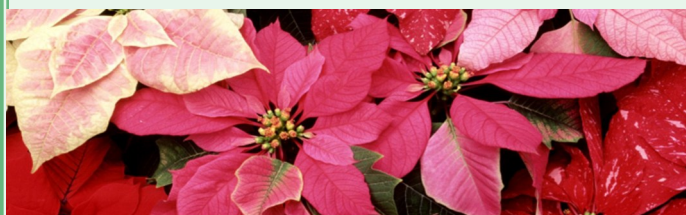
General Checking Balance (10.29.25)
\$6,427

Project Savings Balance (10.29.25)
\$4,522

General Savings Balance (10.29.25) **\$0**

Amount Borrowed on Bank Loan: **\$7,000**

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 23.



Fellowship Serving Rotation:

Nov 2 - Sunday School

Nov 9 - Work Group #1

Nov 16 - Work Group #2

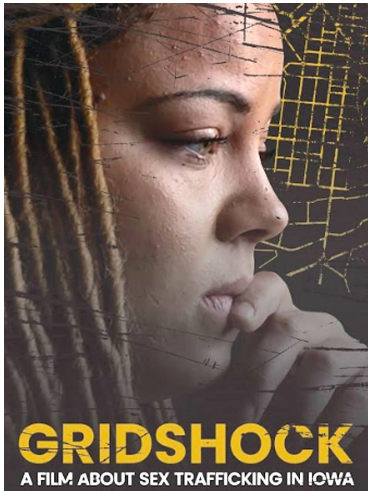
Nov 23 - Work Group #3

Nov 30 - Sunday School

Make a Difference Campaign

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council has come up with a wish list of items that would be beneficial to our church. We're calling it the "Make a Difference Campaign." If you are interested in giving to any of these projects, please reach out to anyone on the church council. You can also let us know if there is a project or item of repair that you think we should include on this list. We very much appreciate your continued regular offering. The items on this list could potentially go over and above to make a difference in our church life. Maybe something is near and dear to your heart, and you would like to give a little extra at one point or another during the year. Thank you for considering any of these items.

PROJECT or EXPENSE ITEM	Projected Cost
Bible Camp Scholarships	\$50--\$100
Bibles for 3rd Graders	\$30/student
Confirmation Retreat Sponsorship	variable
Contemporary Music	\$20 average
Cradle Roll	\$100 per child
Landscape upkeep around church	variable
Scholarships for Bethlehem HS Graduates	\$200 per student
Sidewalk Repair	\$1,000
Sponsor a church member Movie Event	\$100 theater rent
Sponsor Youth Fellowship Event	variable
Sunday School Curriculum	\$120/year
Sunday School Supplies	variable
Technology needs	variable
Timer installed for ringing of the bell	\$500



Gridshock: A Film about Sex Trafficking in Iowa

Duncan Community Hall
Duncan, Iowa

Sunday, November 9
6:00 pm, FREE SHOWING

Presented by Stacy Besch, Team Iowa
Team Iowa is focused on educating on the dangers of human trafficking in Iowa. They are committed to bringing awareness to every community in our state and to help combat and bring clarity on the misconceptions of human trafficking.



To register: lccaltoona.breezechms.com/form/iowalcmcnov2025

Join us for a day set aside for worship, learning, and connection with others who share your heart for ministry.

We'll hear from Mark VanderTuig, reflecting on the faithful foundation of the LCMC and where we've come from, and Danny Householder, pointing us toward where God is leading the church in the years ahead.

The day will include worship, communion, lunch, and plenty of time to connect with fellow pastors and leaders across Iowa. Whether your congregation is large or small, urban or rural, you'll find encouragement and camaraderie here.

Come be refreshed, inspired, and reminded that we're in this together.

Saturday, November 15, 8:30 am - 3:00 pm
Immanuel Lutheran, 900 S Warrior Ln, Waukee, IA



Council Committee Reports

WORSHIP

Your Worship Committee works behind the scenes to help Pastor Eric shepherd our church with Sunday services that have just the right amount of structure depending on the time of year. We attempt to be the sounding board to the council with our congregation's desires. We also

help coordinate the accompanists as needed, although they take care of that seamlessly on their own. When time allows, they will refine the operation of the new acoustic piano/organ, and we will benefit from the melody they will be able to bring. October's meeting included discussion about All Saint's Sunday and how soon the weeks in Advent

will begin. We will meet with the Decorating Committee to see how we can aide each other with the Hanging of the Greens Service. Is there something different or more you would like to see or hear? If so, then let someone on this committee know.

- Darla

EVANGELISM

In our daily routine and rush of being a provider and protector of our family, we, as males, often overlook our own spiritual needs. I encourage you to attend our men's Bible study held

every third Saturday, starting at 7:00 am, led by Pastor Eric. You will find us eager to learn and understand scripture and how it can be applied to our daily lives.

- Darryl

Sunday School Corner

The Joyful Clatter of our NOISY OFFERING

Each week, our children lead the "Noisy Church Offering," joyfully collecting coins that clatter into buckets and hearts alike. It's more than a fun tradition—it's a living lesson in generosity. So far, in 2025, the noisy offering has raised **\$1,362**.

Like the widow in Mark 12:41–44 who gave two small coins, these offerings may seem modest, but their impact is mighty. Every cent reminds us that giving isn't about the amount—it's about the heart behind it.

When you hear that joyful noise, know it's the sound of faith in action—and

the next generation learning to give with love. It's the sound of a church community being built—one coin at a time. **THANK YOU** for your small change!



Our 2025 Church Council

Derek Thilges - President
Kelsey Bosma - Vice President/Stewardship
Thomas Blodgett - Treasurer/Technology
Kim Ostermann - Secretary/Education
Darryl Friest - Evangelism
Katie Mathahs - Fellowship
Darla Thompson - Worship
Larry Lawson - Property

PROJECT FUND UPDATE

Our project fund is now mostly depleted due to necessary projects that needed to be completed. Next time God is calling you to give a little extra offering, we'd appreciate it going to this fund. Thank you!

On October 19, our third grade students received their Bibles. They include Dominyk Roth, Flynn Pentico, Shaelene Thompson, Caleb Willmert (front row), as well as Eli Roth, Beau Holland, Jace Kemnitz, Lydia Boekelman, Adler Jacobs, Clare Jacobs, and Kaya Wubben (back row). **Congratulations!**



Church Council Minutes

October 13, 2025

Meeting Room

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

Members present: Kelsey Bosma, Larry Lawson, Darryl Friest, Kim Ostermann, Darla Thompson, Thomas Blodgett, Susan Jensen, Pastor Eric

Absent: Derek Thilges, Katie Mathahs

The meeting was called to order at 6:05pm by Vice President, Kelsey

Pastor Eric -- council devotions based on 1 Peter 3:13-17 Pastor challenged us with the following questions:

- If you had one minute with someone who wanted to know about the hope you have in Jesus, what would your "Gospel in a nutshell" be?
- Do you know what you believe and why?
- Are you prepared to defend your faith?
- Why is it important to do this with "gentleness and respect"?

President's Report

- Happy Pastor Appreciation Month! We gave pastor a gift with many thanks for all he does.
- Consider ways that we can increase our benevolence without putting strain on our general budget. Discussion included how we might reach out to those in need by taking a second offering occasionally. This could be for specific local needs or a broader range of missions. These wouldn't come from the general budget, but from the hearts of our congregation. "Truly, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40 This quote highlights the idea that helping the less fortunate is a direct act of service to Jesus.

Secretary's Report

- September minutes were approved by email. Motion by Darla; seconded by Derek.
- We made a couple of updates to the "Make a Difference Campaign." We will continue to share in the monthly newsletter, on the Sunday PowerPoint, and on the website.

Treasurer's Report –

- Savings Account: \$0.01
- Checking Account: \$2,651.50
- Youth: \$2,253.67
- Line of Credit: \$7,000.00
- Special Projects Account: \$821.54
- Motion to approve made by Larry; seconded by Darryl; approved

Committee Reports

Technology

- Anyone interested in helping with service technology can contact Thomas Blodgett.
- We are exploring possibilities of a timer for ringing the church bell before worship. Looking at parts totaling about \$200.
- The electronic piano is connected to the sound system, but Thomas will do some tracing and investigating to figure out why some of the mic ports at the altar aren't working. This affects the lectern microphone. Will also work on adjusting sound coming from the speakers while electric piano is playing.

Property

- Blinds for pastor's office are installed. Thank you to Larry for installing.
- Soffit and fascia by the cross needs to be addressed. Estimated cost of approximately \$175.

- New lights for the cross. One of the sockets is broken on the south side.
- Kitchen ovens are ordered. The ladies are cashing in a CD, we have a donation from the Schwartz funeral, and another donor is interested in giving the remaining balance to complete the purchase.

Worship

- Eleven third graders will receive their Bible on October 19.
- SS kids sing as part of the worship on October 19.
- Communion helpers needed:
October 26 Confirmation Sunday: (continuous) – Kim & Megan
November 2: (continuous) – Darla & Darryl
November 9: (at the rail) – Susan

Stewardship

- The Drive-Thru Harvest Soup Supper served about 170. This was the 6th annual drive-thru. A big thank you to Kelsey Bosma, Cassondra Willmert, and Megan Holland for spearheading this event every year! The total raised = \$2,827 after expenses. This will go to the general fund with a small portion designated for a movie event at the Mills Theatre. Plans are already on the calendar for October 11, 2026, with a slight change in serving time from 5:00-6:30pm

Education

- Kim Ostermann is the council member to help coordinate with Sunday School teachers as needed. This will be until new council takes effect in January with someone agreeing to be on education.
- Sunday School students are dismissed before the final hymn so they can go through the refreshments line and prepare for class.
- There's interest in trying to coordinate a way for our Sunday School to donate to students on the Pine Ridge Reservation. This would hopefully help our students engage with what mission dollars can do to help. We will reach out to Abram Neumann in hope that he can help guide us in the best way to proceed. Current Donation Drives - Friends of Pine Ridge Reservation
- Sunday School is down to provide fellowship coffee on November 2.
- Preparations are in the works for the Sunday School Christmas Program. Planning for the program on December 21st during the worship service at 9:30am.

Fellowship

- Fellowship time in the social hall will continue. The fellowship rotation helps to cover every Sunday.
October 26 – Council will order cupcakes and small decorated cake for Confirmation.
November 2 – Sunday School
Having the students go through the fellowship line seems to be going well.
- We plan to work on refreshing the work groups. We'll need to contact potential new people to see if they are willing to participate.
- Suggestions on if/when to have the turkey dinner this year.
2023 was on November 5
2024 was on November 24.
We're looking at the possibility of November 16th. (Sunday School students might be singing during the service.)

Evangelism

- Men's Bible Study meets on the third Saturday each month from 7:00-8:00am. All are welcome.

Pastor's Report

♦ Worship

Pastor continues to lead worship at Timely Mission. He also does regular communion visits. If you know of someone who needs a visit sooner than his next scheduled one, please let him know. The November meeting of the Ministerial Association will have them signing up for leading worship there in 2026.

Eleven 3rd graders will receive a Bible during the October 19th service.

Pastor will preside at a committal service for Beverly Larson.

♦ Ministerial Association

The October 15th meeting will include setting a location for Thanksgiving Eve service which will be Wednesday, November 26th at 7:00pm.

Pastor is applying to the Ley Foundation on behalf of the Ministerial Association to help with food assistance requests. He also has a list of food pantries from around our immediate area with hours, days, and contact information. This is to offset the closing of Buffalo Center Food Pantry.

♦ Education

Confirmation is off to a good start. Three students will be confirmed on Reformation Sunday on October 26th. Tate, Norah, and Gabby.

1G is going well. A recent Wednesday had 26 students attend which is up from last year when 16-20 were attending.

Women's Bible Study continues to meet as well as Men's Fellowship.

♦ LCMC

Pastor attended the Annual Gathering where he connected with many other LCMC pastors including our previous pastors Nate and Mark. Many connections were made including a meet and greet for chaplains. This was one big "family reunion." There were 773 people in attendance. Next year's Annual Gathering will be at Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines, October 4-7.

Office Report:

Deadline for the November newsletter is October 24. The rotation for reports in November includes Worship & Evangelism.

New Business:

September mission was Local – we donated to the Lunchbox L.I.F.T. fundraiser to help with negative lunch accounts. Our regular rotation is: Global, LCMC, Local October mission is global: Hope 4 Kids International Motion made by Thomas, seconded by Darla; motion carried.

Next meeting: Monday, November 10 at 6:00 pm. We will plan to review the Strategic Plan at this meeting.

Motion to adjourn made by Thomas, seconded by Larry; approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

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 the Vanco giving page. Thank you!



Bethlehem Lutheran - NOVEMBER 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 All Saints' Worship with Communion, 9:30 am Sunday School at 10:45 am Worship at 1:30 pm, Timely Mission	3	4 Bible Study with Pastor, 2:00 pm Scout Den Meeting, 6:00 pm	5 Confirmation: Snacks 6:45 pm Class Begins 7:15	6	7	8 Men's Bible Study with Pastor @ 7:00 am, Fellowship Hall
9 Worship with Com- munion, 9:30 am Sunday School 10:45 am	10 Church Council Meeting, 6:00 pm MOMS2MOMS 3:30-5:00 pm	11 Quilting, 1:00 pm	12 Worship Committee Meeting, 8:30 am Community Bible Study, 10:00 am Confirmation: Snacks 6:45 pm Class Begins 7:15	13	14	15 LCMC District Gathering, Waukee
16 Worship at 9:30 am, SS Kids sing Sunday School 10:45 Turkey Dinner, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm	17	18 Scout Den & Pack Meeting, 6 - 8 pm	19 Community Bible Study, 10:00 am Confirmation: Snacks 6:45 pm Class Begins 7:15	20	21	22
23 Worship, at 9:30 am Sunday School 10:45	24 MOMS2MOMS 3:30-5:00 pm	25 Quilting, 1:00 pm	26 Thanksgiving Eve Worship, 7:00 pm, First Reformed Church	27 Thanksgiving	28	29
30 Hanging of the Greens Worship, 9:30 am Sunday School 10:45						

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
201 4th St. NE
P.O. Box 385
Buffalo Center, IA 50424

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.

