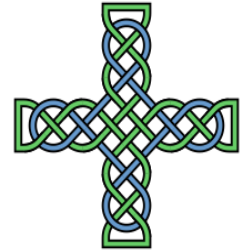
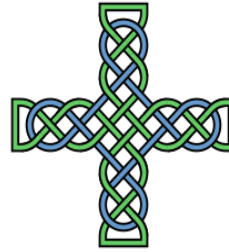


*Faith, hope, and love...
make us available for our neighbors near and far.*

March 2023

Oh Bethlehem!



<<<Calendar of Events>>>

March

01-Lent Meal (6pm) and Service (6:45pm)
05-Communion Sunday
07-Study with Pastor Eric @2pm
08-Lent Meal (6pm) and Service (6:45pm)
12-Communion Sunday
13- Council meets @6pm
14-Quilting @1pm
15-Lent Meal (6pm) and Service (6:45pm)
19-Church
21- Worship Comm @8:30am
22-Lent Meal (6pm) and Service (6:45pm)
26-Church
27-Bethlehem serves 1G supper
28-Quilting @1pm
29-Lent Meal (6pm) and Service (6:45)

<<<Greeters and Ushers>>>

March

5 Neely Jensen(c)Family and DeWayne & Bernice Maass
12 Braden Ullman(c) Family and Derek & Shelby Thilges
19 Tim Weaver Family and Todd & Lori Corporon
26 Patti & Travis Hassebrook and Mark & Deb Landheer

April

*2 Tate Engelbarts(c) Family & Jamie Price Family
*9 Kevin Hagen(c) Family & Brandon Thilges Family
16 Nich Holland Family
23 Jim & Karen Meyering and Matt Pentico Family
30 Marty Schaeffer Family

Lent Services-Confirmants will greet and usher.

Project Fund Update:

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 the general fund budget. We do budget for Property, but this does not cover bigger expenses that may come about.

God is always at work within our church.

When giving to this please designate.

We are so Blessed and Thankful.

Making ourselves available...

Food Bank for March:

Can Soup, Tuna, Can Chicken, Saltines, Muffin Mix, Pasta Side and Box Potatoes.

"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.

Prayers for our Members and friends:

Harlan Melz	Jaya
Clarice Stonebreaker	Bev Larson
Deloris Steffensen	Randy Melz
Brian Bashans	Marcia Aukes
Christina Coughlin	Carolyn Bartz



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. If you have any questions, please ask Jen. **Thank you!**

Every week after our service we gather for Coffee Fellowship. We are so grateful for the many hands that volunteer, bake and serve us each Sunday. It is so nice to be able to sit and visit with our church family. With that said, it is also the time we offer our Sunday School kids a snack, and it is quite a few, aren't we so blessed by those numbers! The SS program has now taken over doing the snacks for their kids and that helps to lessen the amount needed to serve fellowship. So please, continue to sign up and take a Sunday to serve. **WE APPRECIATE YOU!**

<<Pastor Eric>>

Many of you have already figured this out, but for those who haven't, allow me to burst your bubbles: **I am not perfect.** I know some of you are very shocked by that and others are saying, "*You are just calling the kettle black*". Whatever the case, I want to put that out there and quote this verse, "**for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**" (Romans 3:23). That's right, we are all sinners. We all make mistakes, even me, and that is why I need you.

My favorite thing to do after worship is to visit with people (you have probably figured that out already as well). I especially enjoy it when people bring up the sermon, asking questions or sharing comments. And it is not always about the sermon. I once sat down at a table where two individuals were discussing the End Times and immediately, they included me in the conversation. I love that. Another time, some people were commenting on the sermon when one individual gave me a suggestion. I love that too. This person later called to apologize; afraid they had offended me. Let me tell you, if you have a concern about something I have said or did not say, please tell me. You are NOT going to offend me. If I have made a mistake, please tell me. I once got Rachel and Rebecca mixed up in a sermon. After worship, this lady, very hesitantly, corrected me and then apologized for doing so. No, do not apologize. I am a sinner and thus I make mistakes. If I need correction, then do it. It will benefit the WHOLE congregation. If you have a suggestion, then share it. It could very well benefit the WHOLE congregation.

As a fellow brother in Christ, I need your help. Actually, we all do. The apostle Paul is very clear that we are all sinners, but he is also equally clear that we are to be about building up the church, and the church is you and me. If a brother or sister in Christ is caught in a sin, then it behooves us to call that sin out, not to put them down, but to build them up through their repentance. If I am in error, then please tell me. Coming to me and saying, "*I do not like your preaching*" or "*Your preaching stinks*", does not help me. Rather, for example, "*You were talking too fast today, and I could not understand you*" is something I can work on, to the benefit of the WHOLE congregation. You get the point. And this also goes for all of your brothers and sisters in Christ.

If you care about me, each other, and the church, then you will not be silent. Say something. Let us build one another up in love. Let us build up the church so we can stand strong and firm on the Gospel of Jesus. And so I ask you (if you are not already doing so) to pray for me that I remain faithful. Pray for the church and the Church. Let us continue building the church up, one person at a time. To God be all glory, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

<<Devotional opportunities>>

For those looking for a devotional opportunity we have a deal for you. Pastor Eric has been writing a daily devotional since February 2022. The group has worked through the New Testament and now is in the book of Genesis. If you are interested in receiving these devotions, there are two ways to do that. The first is through the Facebook group called, "Reading through the Bible". This is a private group so only group members can see posts, but the group is open to anyone. Let Pastor Eric or a group member know if you want to join. The second way is via email. Simply send Pastor Eric an email and he will add your address to the group. Devotions are posted daily at 6:30 AM on Facebook and emailed at the same time. Let Pastor Eric know if you have any questions.

<<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

<<Baptisms>> This month we welcome into our church family, Lydia Boekelman and Virginia Hagedorn

<<cradle roll>>

Cradle Roll was blessed with a few new names to add to our roster. Cradle Roll now has seven children enrolled in monthly newsletters. We are looking for volunteers to help with this ministry. If you are interested, please contact Cassie Willmert. 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.

JOIN US FOR THE NEXT 5 WEEKS
AS WE GATHER FOR LENT.
A FREE WILL OFFERING MEAL IS SERVED @6PM,
WITH THE SERVICE AT 6:45PM.

<<1G update and request>>

God is good, all the time. All the time, God is good. Amen? God has been and is on the move here in Buffalo Center. God has brought the increase. And with that increase I have two requests,



(1) Pray, pray and pray some more (but you are probably already doing that, so please keep it up), and

(2) You. We are in need of people to BE WITH KIDS. We are not asking you to plan a lesson or a craft, we need adults who love kids to love on kids. Plain and simple. We need you to be present and show them Jesus. Will you answer the call? Just show up on a Monday at 3:15 PM and we will get you started. It's that easy and that important. God is doing a thing here. ***Praise be to God!***

1G Senior High We are off to a great start and hope to see this continue to grow. We start out with a hot breakfast and then go into a short time of devotions and conversations. This is offered every Tue. Morning to all high schoolers, starting at 7:15 am

<<council president

For questions, concerns, ideas, and praises, please feel free to contact me.

Amy Walk

email: billwalkbc@gmail.com

cell#: 641-590-5845

<<treasurer>>

Current offering since the beginning of 2023 is **19,146.00**

Average weekly giving: **2,127.00**

Budgeted weekly giving for 2023: **2,830.00**

As always there are great things coming for Bethlehem church.

<<technology>>

We are always looking for volunteers for tech on Sundays and other events. Training is available.

Thomas Blodgett

<<worship>>

Palm Sunday - April 2 - SS kids sing - 5th graders make wafers for their first communion

Maundy Thursday, April 6 - 5th graders first communion - ecumenical worship at 7:00 at Bethlehem

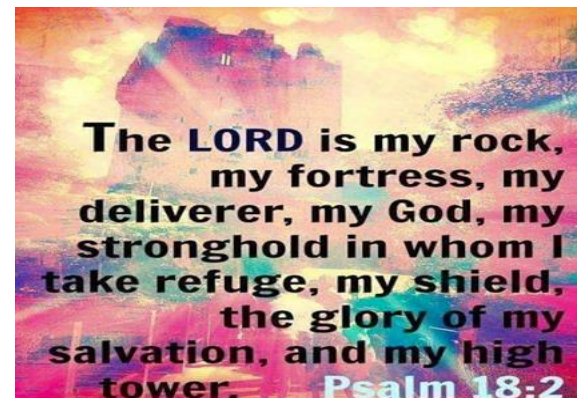
Good Friday, April 7- 7:00 ecumenical service at Congregational Church

Easter Sunday, April 9 - 2 services planned with breakfast between services

May 7 - SS teacher appreciation

May 14 - Mother's Day - SS kids sing

May 21 - Senior Sunday



<<fellowship & evangelism>>

February is one of my favorite months to **TURN THE CALENDAR PAGE!** March -- Spring is on the way!! We are in the season of Lent which is often described as a time of preparation and an opportunity to go deeper with God. This means that it's a time for personal reflection that prepares one's heart and mind for Good Friday and Easter. Spring is also a time to prepare for planting – getting ready to sow the good seeds.

I'm hoping many of you have seen this in time to participate in a great opportunity to attend a movie at the Lake Mills Theater with our church family free of charge. Special thanks to an anonymous donor for providing this opportunity. We have reserved the theater for Sunday, March 5th at 12:00pm for the viewing of “**Jesus Revolution**”. You are welcome to invite friends, but please let Amy Walk or Jen McGrady know how many are planning to attend. The theater would like to know a number to plan for.

Special thanks to Jen McGrady for organizing the food and to all those who contributed to the Iowa District Leadership Conference held at Bethlehem in February. It was a great day to share fellowship time with our LCMC partners in Iowa as well as providing valuable information.

Our church work groups are involved in planning Lenten meals prior to each Wednesday evening service. The meal will start at 6:00pm and the service will begin at 6:45pm. Everyone is invited to this time of fellowship where we can nourish our bodies as well as our hearts as we share time with our church family. Our confirmation students will also be assisting with the serving and cleanup. Any freewill donations will go to support their time at Confirmation Camp.

We will also be planning a
**Community Spring Coffee on Thursday,
April 20th from 9:00 – 11:00am.**

Please invite any of your family or friends
in the community to join us on that day
for a time to relax and enjoy coffee, tea,
cinnamon rolls, coffeecake,
and each other's company!



This the schedule for events that are coming up for our work groups:

1. March 1 – Lenten Meal – Group 1 (Rita & Jen chair)
2. March 8 – Lenten Meal – Group 2 (Cheryl & Shirley chair)
3. March 15 – Lenten Meal – Group 3 (Dawn & Kim chair)
4. March 22 – Lenten Meal – Group 1 (Rita & Jen chair)
5. March 29 – Lenten Meal – Group 2 (Cheryl & Shirley chair)
6. Thursday April 20 – **Spring Coffee** (Dawn & Kim chair)

We won't need all the people in the assigned work group to furnish for these events, but the chairman of your group might be calling to ask if you would furnish either food or money to help cover expenses. A couple other events planned for the fall are Guest Night and the Fall Luncheon. These are two events that require additional help. Thank you in advance for being willing to help with these projects.

Don't hesitate to contact either one of us with ideas for strengthening our fellowship or evangelism outreach!

Daryl Friest & Kim Ostermann

Here is a repeat of the work groups that was included in the annual meeting packet:

GROUP 1 Rita Ellsworth & Jen McGrady	GROUP 2 Shirley Hagenson & Cheryl Baumann	GROUP 3 Dawn Meinders & Kim Ostermann
NAME	NAME	NAME
Adams, Jodi	Baumann, Cheryl	Meinders, Dawn
Angstman, Emily	Hagenson, Shirley	Ostermann, Frances
Badje, Mary	Hager, Renae	Ostermann, Kimberly (Doug)
Baumann, Nikki	Hansen, Gayle	Ostermann, Kim (Mark)
*Becker, Marge	Hanson-Hullstrom, Connie	Ostermann, Megan
Berggren, Lisa	Hartman, Emi	Ostrander, Susan
Berhow, Linda	Hassebroek, Patricia	Paul, Deena
Bierle, Lorie	Hofbauer, Kathy	Pentico, Amanda
Blodgett, Christina	Holland, Megan	Price, Jamie
Blodgett, Amanda	Jacobs, Meggon	Price, Tammy
Boekelman, Courtney	Jensen, Susan	Roth, Teresa
Bosma, Kelsey	Jensvold, Dawn	Sabin, Tonya
Bosma, Navonne	Johnson, Jennifer	Sachs, Renae
Buss, Karen	Kahler, Annette	Sapp, Glenda
Cooper, Teresa	Kakacek, Kate (snowbird)	Sapp, Laurie
Corporon, Laurie	Kemnitz, Alyssa	Schaefer, Amy
Dotseth, Marlys	Landheer, Deb	Sunde, Joan
Ellsworth, Rita	Larson, Jackie	Thilges, Lauren
Engelbarts, Heidi	Lawson, Jennifer	Thilges, Shelby
Ernst, Iva (snowbird)	Lenz, Deb	Thompson, Darla
Frerichs, Mara	Lowe, Mary Lee	Thompson, Kim
Friest, Sandra	Maass, Berneice	Ullmann, Robin
Giesking, Mary	Melz, Jill	Walk, Amy
Greensky, Katie	Meyering, Karen	Weaver, Julie
*Griffin, Delores	*Murra, Dee	Wempen, Jennifer
Hagen, Amy	Olson, Mary Ann	Willmert, Cassandra
McGrady, Jennifer	Olson, Robin	Winter, Kelly Ruth
		Wubben, Jamie
		Wubben, Rachel

* denotes "honorary" member – they might consider making a monetary donation but are unable to provide baked goods or physical help at an event.



PARISH THREE

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

110 340TH Street, Titonka, IA

Annual Men's Soup Supper

SERVING CHILI & OYSTER STEW

MONDAY, MARCH 6TH, 2023 SERVING TIME – 5:00 – 7:00 P.M.

<<property>>

The roof repair is on schedule and will be coming up soon. If you are able to direct any offering towards The projects fund, it is greatly appreciated. This is where we will have to draw funds from to pay for it.

<<education>>

Hello everyone- just a reminder that attendance to SS each week is super important, because we have a lot of fun things coming up! The kids will sing on Palm Sunday, as well as on Mother's Day, and we are excited to announce our Sunday School Appreciation Day!

On Sunday, May 7, we will be celebrating with a SS Appreciation Day! There will be a presentation/music during church, as well as brunch served right after service for ALL members, students, and families! We look forward to this day of praise, fellowship, and thanks!

Thanks to everyone for their continued support of our programs and ministry,

Lisa Berggren & Kelsey Bosma

<<stewardship>>

Hello! We just want to remind everyone that it is very important to complete the time and talent survey. We will use information generated from that survey to assess what we can do in and around our church. With the committed members that we have, we would love to expand and make better what we already do, while still having people involved in things that they are comfortable doing. Thank you for your time, and please let us know if you have any more stewardship ideas!

Teresa Cooper & Kelsey Bosma

"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

Options to fill out Time and Talents Surveys.
If you need one mailed out to you, please call the office.
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfKY9q5IeNsMPvr8B7yxSY7-HqqbG1Hv5v7yrvrETHvcSuuwQ/viewform?usp=sf_link



Church Council Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2023 @ 6 pm

held in the Meeting Room

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

Members present: Pastor Eric, Amy Walk, Kelsey Bosma, Daryl Friest, Lisa Berggren, Thomas Blodgett, Jen McGrady, Kim Ostermann. Absent: Derek Thilges, Susan Jensen, Teresa Cooper

The meeting was called to order @ 6:04 pm

1. Pastor Eric opened with devotion and prayer.
2. Secretary's Report
 - a. January minutes approved via email. Motion to approve by Kelsey; seconded by Amy.
3. Treasurer's Report –
 - a. Savings Account: \$384.34
 - b. Checking Account: \$2480.00
 - c. Youth: \$1659.53
 - d. Line of Credit: -- 0
 - e. Special Projects Account: \$4913.00Motion to approve made by Kelsey; seconded by Daryl; approved.

4. Committee Reports
 - a. Technology
 - i. Thomas and Brian are looking at going through all the available microphones and labeling for easier use.
 - b. Property
 - i. Updates from roofer, "We're on the list."
 - ii. Leaking toilet in the parsonage is being addressed.
 - iii. The "projects fund" was sufficient to cover repair of the roof, but we needed to draw from it to cover some other bills. Some of it has been replenished as was planned, but we really need to keep that fund going to cover upcoming/unexpected costs and honestly just to have a cushion.
 - c. Worship
 - i. Council members signed up to serve communion.
 - 1 February 22 (Ash Wednesday) – Lisa Berggren
 - 2 March 5 – Kim Ostermann
 - 3 March 12 (continuous) – Amy Walk & Kelsey Bosma
 - ii. The Worship Committee meets February 21.
 - iii. Lent begins on February 22 with Ash Wednesday service @ 7:00pm.
 - iv. Other Wednesday Lenten Services start at 6:45pm with a meal served at 6:00pm.
 - d. Stewardship
 - i. "Time and Talents" update - we need more surveys turned in.
 - e. Education
 - i. 1G is going well – a few less attending. Bethlehem serves again on March 27th.
 - ii. Vacation Bible School will be hosted at Bethlehem this year. It will be five days from July 31 – August 4. There is a planning meeting on February 26th at 1:00pm to talk about the curriculum. We'll need volunteers to teach and assist in other ways.
 - iii. Sunday School students will sing February 26, April 2 (Palm Sunday), and May 14 (Mother's Day)
 - iv. Sunday School Appreciation Day is in the works for the end of the year.
 - v. Plans for confirmation retreat are in the works. A camp deposit has been made.
 - g. Fellowship/Evangelism
 - i. Planning for upcoming Lenten services with a meal before. We plan to have "work groups" assigned to prepare meals. Confirmation students help serve and clean up with freewill offerings going to the youth fund for Confirmation Camp, etc.
 - ii. Continue to offer a viewing of "The Chosen" in the meeting room following church services.
 - iii. Fellowship time in the social hall will continue. Parents of Sunday School students will provide snacks for each classroom. Donations of juice boxes would be appreciated. Looking for volunteers to provide snacks for adults.
 - iv. Other upcoming ideas include:
 - *Renting the Lake Mills Movie Theater (possibly "Jesus Revolution")
[Jesus Revolution ~ In Theaters Everywhere February 24](#)
 - *Looking for activities or speakers that might be of interest.
5. Pastor's Report
 - a. Pastor Eric shared a Lent overview. Ash Wednesday worship on February 22nd at 7:00pm will include imposition of ashes. He will be making ashes that week using the dried palm branches from last year's Palm Sunday. The Lenten theme this year is "Call Stories" (Moses, Samuel, Gideon, Jeremiah, and Saul/Paul). An ecumenical Maundy Thursday worship service is to be held at Bethlehem on April 6 with Good Friday service at First Congregational Church on April 7. The worship team is working on plans for Easter.
 - b. First Communion classes will start soon for fifth grade students.
 - c. Plans are in place for the LCMC Iowa District Leadership Conference on Saturday, February 18. Jen has been organizing the food and volunteers. We're planning for between 50-60 people. Mary

Ann Olson is playing piano for worship. Pastor Eric will lead a short worship/devotional time in the morning. "You are not alone" is the theme for the day which includes a variety of resources to strengthen pastors and leaders in their ministry to their congregation and community. Pastor Chris Fiske is the keynote speaker. He wears many hats, including Army National Guard Chaplain and Registered Investment Advisor. Pastor Eric will preside over a short communion service to close the conference and provide a sending blessing.

- d. Worship time at Timely Mission has been shut down due to illness but hopes to be back on schedule soon. Pastor Eric leads the service on February 26 and every fourth Sunday through June.
- e. Pastor Eric leads the monthly Women's Bible Study on the first Tuesday of the month. They started the book of James in February. James is sometimes referred to as the "Proverbs of the New Testament."
- f. Sunday worship will finish up the Epiphany sermon series, "Different," with Transfiguration Sunday on February 19. The singing of the Lord's Prayer will be introduced on that Sunday with Mary Ann Olson playing the music. We would like to include this periodically during worship moving forward.
- g. Pastor is continuing with a Facebook devotional group. He is finishing up with Revelations and the New Testament and will be starting with Genesis on February 16. Email subscriptions are available for those not on Facebook.

6. Office Report:

- a. SharePoint was reviewed for new council members. This allows us to easily share documents pertaining to church needs.
- b. We are interested in having a Funeral Guide and Wedding Guide to assist with expectations. Jen will work on this but would like some input. We are checking with other churches for ideas.
- c. Grant and Meggon Jacobs family, Larry and Jennifer Lawson family have been accepted in membership.
Motion to approve by Kelsey; seconded by Thomas; approved
We plan to have an upcoming Sunday where we welcome new members. We also plan to address the process for new members by making an addition to the by-laws.
- d. Jen McGrady is typically in the office on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- e. Pastor's hours are Monday through Thursday beginning about 8:30am-4:00pm

7. New Business

- a. February Mission: split between Ingham Okoboji and Riverside Bible Camps (regular rotation is LCMC, local, global)
Digital Motion made by Kelsey; seconded by Lisa; approved.

8. Next meeting: March 13 @ 6:00pm

9. March Newsletter deadline: February 24

10. Motion to Adjourn made by Daryl, seconded by Kelsey; approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm

Close with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted By

Kim L. Ostermann

Secretary

FIND US ON FACEBOOK
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Bethlehem Lutheran Sunday School

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