

# THE MESSENGER

July 2025

*The Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church*

*Proclaiming Christ. Nurturing Faith. Restoring Hope.*

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## From the Pastor's Desk

### The Kingdom, Not Just the Church

When Jesus began His public ministry, His first sermon was short and simple: "The Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mark 1:15). He didn't say, "The Church is at hand." He said, "The Kingdom." That's not just a difference in vocabulary—it's a difference in vision.

I've been reflecting on this a lot since my recent visit to Bethany Lutheran Church in Detroit. What struck me most wasn't just what they were doing—but how they were thinking. Their ministry wasn't centered around the success of one church building or one program or one reputation. It was Kingdom-minded. They were dreaming bigger than their property lines. And honestly, it convicted me—in the best possible way.

Too often, we think about ministry in terms of our church: our Sunday attendance, our budget, our calendar, our building. And there's nothing wrong with caring for those things—they matter. But when we limit the mission of God to the maintenance of the institution, we've already lost the plot. God's Kingdom is not limited to what happens inside these walls. It is not limited to our zip code, our comfort zone, or our congregation. It's breaking in all around us—just like Jesus said it would.

The Kingdom of God is His reign—His rule—in hearts, homes, neighborhoods, and nations. It's what we pray for when we say, "Thy Kingdom come." It's what we long for when we see brokenness in our city. It's what we taste at the Lord's Table. It's what we prepare for as we wait for Christ's return.

So here's the question I've been wrestling with: Are we thinking too small? Are we shrinking the size of God's Kingdom to the size of our sanctuary? Are we letting our desire for safety, control, or tradition keep us from stepping out in faith?

Jesus never told us to build a brand. He told us to make disciples. He never said, "Maintain what you've got." He said, "Go." He didn't say, "Keep it safe." He said, "Lose your life for My sake and you'll find it."

If we're serious about being part of the Kingdom, then we must think differently. We must collaborate—not compete—with other churches. We must serve—not simply host—our neighbors. We must see every ministry opportunity not as a way to grow Bethlehem, but to grow the Kingdom. Because at the end of the day, it's not about Bethlehem's name. It's about His.

I wonder what would happen if we started dreaming Kingdom dreams. If we started asking, "What does Fort Wayne need?" instead of "What can we manage?" If we looked at our school building and saw not an empty space, but a Kingdom outpost. If we partnered with others—not just to keep the lights on—but to bring the Light of Christ to places still stuck in darkness.

That kind of vision takes courage. It takes sacrifice. It takes trust. But it's exactly the kind of vision Jesus gave us.

"The Kingdom of God is at hand." That means it's close. It's active. It's on the move. The only question is: Will we join in?

Let's be a people who think bigger. Let's not ask, "What's best for the church?"

Let's ask, "What's best for the Kingdom?"

And then, let's do it.

In Christ,  
Pastor Ben



**Ways to watch WORSHIP ANEW:**

**Online - <https://worshipanew.org/>**

**Sunday at 6:30am on (WISE-TV Channel 33)**

**Sunday at 7:00am on (EPTA channel 21.2)**

**Sunday at 11:30am on TCT (WINM channel 12)**

**July 6, 2025 – Fourth Sunday after Pentecost**

**Hear Me**

**Rev. Shayne Jonker - Luke 10:16**

It's all about the sending. The Father sends Jesus. Likewise, Jesus sends disciples as His apostles. And this sending of the seventy-two is one of the foundation stones of the Office of the Holy Ministry. His words are their words. "The one who hears you, hears me" (Luke 10:16 ESV). You have Jesus' Word on it, and His Word is sure.

**July 13, 2025 – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**

**What Do You See?**

**Rev. William Mueller - Luke 10:25-37**

The Parable of the Good Samaritan is a well-known and much-loved parable of Jesus. But are we missing something important if we only see a message of "love your neighbor" in it? Could this parable be a sort of theological Rorschach test? Take a deeper dive into this parable to see some truly amazing grace!

**July 20, 2025 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**

**Making Good Choices**

**Rev. Paul Shoemaker - Luke 10:38-42**

Every parent admonishes their child to "make good choices." God also wants us, His children, to make good choices. Join us on Worship Anew as we answer the question, "What is a good choice in the eyes of God?"

**July 27, 2025 – Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**

**Lord, Teach us to Pray**

**Rev. Scott Zeckzer - Luke 11:1**

God calls us to get to know Him. He has a big surprise of what He wants us to call Him. He also has a big surprise of what He wants us to talk about with Him.



**LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES**

[www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org)

To find airings near you, check the broadcast guide at [lhm.org/guide](http://lhm.org/guide).

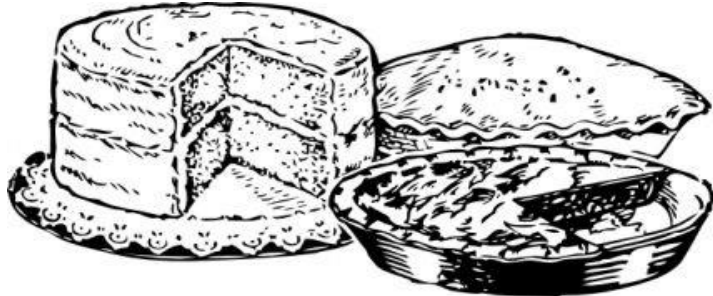
The Lutheran Hour is available today in many other ways beyond traditional radio. From the American Forces Network, Sirius XM satellite radio, [lutheranhour.org](http://lutheranhour.org), the Connected by LHM mobile app, Amazon Alexa, Spotify, iHeartRadio, YouTube, dialing in on your phone, and more, listeners can hear the weekly sermons whenever and wherever they are.

For more information about Lutheran Hour Ministries, visit [lhm.org](http://lhm.org).



[www.myfwl.org](http://www.myfwl.org)





## Calling all bakers!

While we always have opportunities to serve lunch every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month at the Rescue Mission, we also have opportunities for those who want to donate a dessert to be served along with Lunch on those Sundays we serve. You can find the sign-up sheet and additional information on what to expect on the bulletin board just outside the Book Nook library.

Contact either Randy Hapner @ 260-745-7477 or Ruth Bates @260-417-0600 if you have further questions.



## Food Bank Report

By Sharon Shediack  
May

We provided food to 367 individuals. They included 162 children under the age of 18, and 42 individuals over the age of 60.

Our congregation provided 326# of food. We went to Community Harvest four times this month to purchase 2094# of food in the amount of \$896.

Our 13 volunteers gave 112 hours of their time.

We could use beans (dry or canned), soup, pasta, canned fruit & vegetables, and peanut butter. Thanks to ALL of you for all your many volunteer hours, dedication and the financial support you give to help provide this mission at Bethlehem.

## HELP KEEP THE FOOD BANK SHELVES STOCKED

Scour your pantries, include them on your shopping list. Bring a grocery bag of a few non-perishable items to the Saturday and Sunday services to the front pews during the Offering.



Every  
Donation  
Makes A  
Difference

## URGENT NEEDS

**Beans (dry or canned)  
soup, pasta, canned fruit  
& vegetables, and peanut  
butter.**

# Bethlehem Mission News and Prayers

By Jane Miller

Dear Bethlehem Family

One of the devotionals we receive here at the Lutheran Life Villages Chapel, which I would encourage you to make available for our seniors at Bethlehem, is named Hope-Full Living -Daily Devotions for Living Life to the Fullest -Written by Seniors for Seniors! These devotions come quarterly, and each 3-month issue has a theme. These devotions just now finishing have had the focus of "Expectations, Contentment, and Hope - Turning to the Lord in every season of life." Men, women, retired church workers and laypersons write these devotions, and they are very meaningful! They've come under the umbrella of Worship Anew, and you can even order it through them to be mailed to your home!

They've come under reason I bring this up here is that the issues, which are in large-print digest form, have very meaningful Scriptures featured to meditate on. On this Monday, June 23, the devotion was titled: "Character Produces Hope," and was based on Romans 5:3-5: "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because He has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with His love."

Now, of course, all we Christian Believers need these encouraging words from the Apostle Paul. But these particular devotions are written with seniors in mind, by other seniors, and yesterday these words were just what I needed to hear! So I'd like to encourage other seniors at Bethlehem, whether still living in their own homes, in a senior living center or nursing home such as LLV, to make use of these encouraging devotional aids! We all need to receive or give encouragement as workers in the Kingdom!

## PRAY FOR US

\*Joe Boway and his younger son, Joshua, have been in Liberia since June 10th, visiting Liberia, both in the Capital City of Monrovia and in the rural villages they needed to reach by a Mission Aviation Fellowship Cessna aircraft. During part of this trip Joshua has been helping his dad, in Joe's words: "We will visit our schools and be part of several kindergarten graduations. I will meet with the pastors, principals and teachers to plan for our 2025-26 school year. Joshua will visit the jungle village where I was born and raised and meet his Liberian relatives for the first time! He will also help with the reading program at 4 of our schools. Joshua just completed his freshman year at Concordia High School, and looks forward to meeting his Liberian relatives and the students at our schools." Please pray for Joe and Joshua as they complete this trip and return to Fort Wayne on Thursday, July 3rd. Joe asks that God will bless the work done on this trip, use it for His glory and bless both Joe and Joshua with a good time of rest and a joyful reunion with Glendora and Joe Jr.!

\*Sarah and Zack Anderson thank you all for your prayers for their safe travel and arrival in Southeast Asia! They were able to find a good place to rent and live while Zack attends Linguistic School at Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Right now they are visiting Tim and Michelle and also the city and friends where they both taught as teammates, a wonderful blessing for all!

\*LAMB Thanks us for our prayers for the good second week of the outreach group, Parties in the Park. At least 8 Muslim children joined in that, and this week the youth, leaders, and children are out there again in spite of the heat, with a ladies tea and diaper giveaway for mothers. Finally, there will be a Day Camp at Camp Lutherhaven the week of July 14-17 for the kids who have joined them at Party-in-the-Park, along with many of New Life Lutheran's own youth who sign up to go! Over 50 kids will be eligible this year for Day Camp! Please pray that God will provide all the vehicles needed to transport that many children each day. This is a wonderful outreach for Burmese and neighborhood kids!

\*Please pray for the Kids Clubhouse going on at our own Bethlehem Church right now! Many seeds are sewn in these outreach activities, bringing children to Jesus, as He asked us to do, as is written in our own front cornerstone! God's blessings on all of you who are able to be involved in this important ministry to His little and big kids!!!



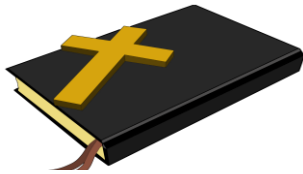
# BETHLEHEM FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY

*"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commands that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)*

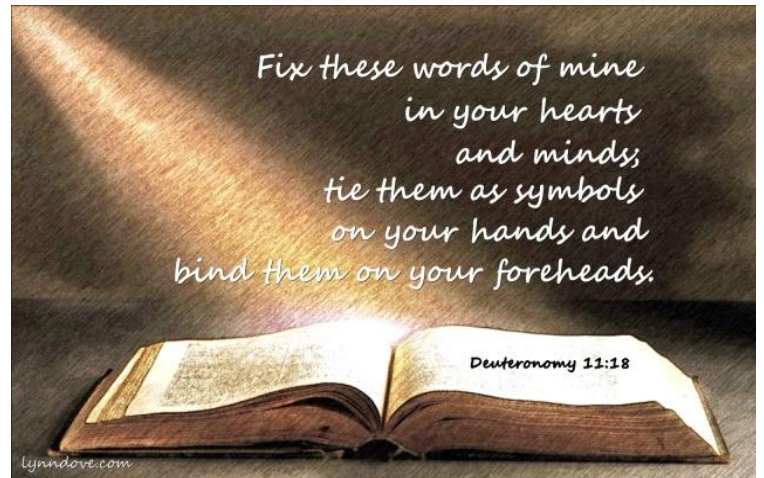
## EDUCATION HOUR

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**10:30am-11:30am**



The Bethlehem Men's Prayer Breakfast will be held Saturday, July 26, in the cafeteria starting at 8:30am. Our focus is on the Edomites about whom much of the book of Obadiah is focused. The Edomites are much like the people of today. Please plan to join us for breakfast, a devotion by Bill Ihssen, prayer, and our study of God's Word. *"Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, [the king of Judah,] 'A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the [Dead] Sea.'" II Chronicles 20:2a NIV*



# LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR

The Mental Health Initiative at Bethlehem is under the direction of Joyce Knipstein. Bethlehem seeks to be a caring community and to provide hope.



## Strengthening Mental Health in Summer

Summer! Many of us view it as an exciting time to go out and do activities, take vacations, and spend more time outdoors. It can be a time full of excitement and happiness depending how we spend our time. In fact, summer is a great time to invest in lifestyle habits and support your mental health. There is science that points to summer being a time of better mental health.

### How the Summer Affects Mental Health

One of the main ways the summer can help with mental health is through the sunshine. Because of the warmer weather, many of us spend more time outdoors in the summer, plus the sun is out for longer than in other seasons. The increased sun exposure boosts our vitamin D levels, and can even improve mood, leading to better mental health. Spending time in the sun also helps your body produce more melatonin (sleep hormone) at night, allowing you to sleep better and overall feel better.

While there are some stressors unique to summer, such as feeling overwhelmed by the amount of activities and getting less sleep, it is a good time for most people's mental health. Therefore, it is a good time to set habits and prepare for the coming months that are colder and less energizing.

### Forming Habits

**Set boundaries.** You don't have to say yes to every opportunity you are presented with. Seek out the activities and plans that seem the best to you and take breaks when you need them.

**Set a sleep schedule.** Maintaining a consistent sleep schedule can help ensure you get adequate sleep. One possible way to do this is by sleeping with the sun – don't stay up for too long once it is dark outside.

**Engage in physical activity.** Improving your physical health can have great benefits on your mental health. With the warmer weather comes more opportunities for outdoor exercise and play. Set a standard for how active you are now so that you will more likely find ways to stay active moving forward.

**Have fun!** Making an effort to intentionally improve your mental health is beneficial, but don't let it get in the way of your fun. Setting rhythms, including therapy if needed, are great, but you need to enjoy life too. Find a balance between responsibility and fun!

*If you find yourself in need of mental health support this summer, Centerstone is here to help.*

*Call us at 1-877-HOPE123 (877-467-3123) or visit [centerstone.org/connect-with-us/](https://www.centerstone.org/connect-with-us/) to get connected with care.*



## BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY

If you feel you would also benefit from the care of our Stephen Ministry Bereavement program, please call Pastor Ben (989-907-9481), Thresa Lightning (260-417-1450) or Richard Pierce (260-450-2280), our Grief Coordinators.

# BETHLEHEM'S 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

## "Throughout All Generations"

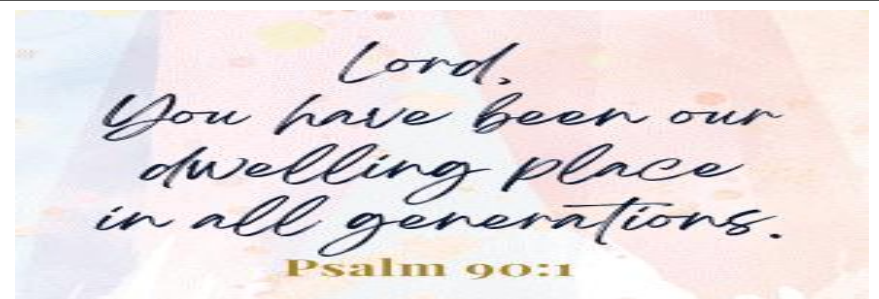
*"Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations." Psalm 90:1*

This is a tentative plan schedule.

- January 11, Sunday: Kick-off with sit-down meal
- March 13, Friday: FISH FRY
- April 19, Saturday: Great America Clean with the City event
- May 31, Sunday: Church Potluck Picnic
- June 20, Saturday: Neighborhood Walk – including 3205 Alexander Ave.
- July 18, Saturday: Community Fest w/clubhouse
- August: LSUS clean up
- Sept. 13, Sunday: Education & Alumni Celebration with History of Education and recognition of Confirmation classes (a Charcuterie Table)
- October: Missions featured the entire month
- November: Collect food bank items the entire month
- December: Wrap up with a special musical event TBD Organ recital, song fest, etc.

**Volunteers are still needed!** Please pray and consider using your skills and talents and join one of the following committees:

Thank Offering, Commemorative item (s), Community Service or any other available committee. Please contact Rhonda in church office for questions or you may contact a member of the steering committee—Pastor Ben, Rachele Dance or Sharon Dietrich.



## **VIDEO RECORDING SESSIONS HAVE BEEN RESCHEDULED**

After some adjustments, we're finally able to reschedule the video recording session for part of Bethlehem's 100th anniversary celebration. The new date is **Sept. 7 from 1-4 p.m.** in the sanctuary.

These 5-minute videos will consist of three questions:

1. When and why did you come to Bethlehem?
2. What are a couple of your favorite memories?
3. What has Bethlehem meant to you?

These recordings will be played before services throughout the anniversary year. Also, those being interviewed do not need to be current members. The main requirement is having some great memories about our church!

If you are interested, please consider emailing Blake Sebring at [blakeds@frontier.com](mailto:blakeds@frontier.com) so we can get a rough estimate of those wishing to participate. Seating will be available in the Fellowship Hall, and we will not



# WOMEN of BETHLEHEM



National: [lwml.org](http://lwml.org)  
State/Local: [lwmlindiana.org](http://lwmlindiana.org)

## RUMMAGE SALE

In 2024 our Rummage Sale involved our sister LSUS churches (Mt. Calvary, Peace & Zion), and all proceeds went to LSUS. For several reasons, we will not be having an annual Rummage Sale for the Community this year. It takes much planning, leadership, and many volunteers. Many hours are spent in preparation, execution and clean-up. Many of our rooms are used to store and sort items. As many Bethlehem members are involved in planning our 100th Anniversary as well as considering how our building can be used for the community, our plate is full! Hopefully we can resume our Rummage Sale in the near future, benefitting the Women of Bethlehem and our Community.

## FOR YOUR SUMMER CALENDAR:

Saturday, July 26th, WOB Summer Social at Berne Swiss Days, followed by food/fellowship at Rainbow Lake (Hapner's Cottage). Car pool from Bethlehem, more details later.



## DESSERTS FOR DADS

Thanks to all the awesome Bethlehem Bakers who prepared and decorated boxes.  
Thanks to all of you who purchased a dessert for those special fathers. 19 Desserts were donated and \$435.00 was raised for the Women of Bethlehem's General Fund.



Lutheran  
Women  
in Mission



# The Joyful Corner

## Summer Survival: 5 Minutes with Jesus Every Morning

By Ashley Weston

Proverbs 16:3 says, "*Commit to the LORD everything you do. Then your plans will succeed.*"

Summer is here, "Hallelujah!" Oh, how I do love the warmer temperatures of summer, long awaited beach vacations, and more relaxed days with kids out of school. There is so much to be grateful for in summer. However, if you are anything like me, fitting some time in with Jesus every Summer morning can get, well, let's face it....put on the back burner. Yes, routines are altered with lots of activities going on and that much needed morning devotional time get replaced with whatever your ever changing daily schedule is...

So with that in mind, I wanted to challenge you to commit to just 5 minutes with Jesus every morning (come on we can all make time for that). I promise, it will be the ONLY way that you can truly survive and thrive this summer! It might not seem like it, but just 5 minutes with the Creator of the Universe can lay the foundation for whatever last minute surprises each day might bring and all the while fill you with great joy!

So how do you do it? Well, this is what I am going to do, so join please join me! Pray-Read-Pray for 5 minutes. Yep, start each morning with:

1. Pray: A quick Good morning Jesus! Ask Him to open your eyes, ears and heart for whatever He wants to teach you that day.
2. Read: Open up your Bible and read one a day.
3. Pray: When you are done, pray and ask the Lord to give you wisdom to apply His Word throughout your day!



*My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations," says the LORD Almighty. Malachi 1:11*

There's nothing like a beautiful rising sun to remind us of our God's greatness.

*How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number-- living things both large and small. Psalms 104:24-25*

Soak it in – the vastness of the ocean.

*The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. Proverbs 4:18*

Go ahead – enjoy that beautiful sun-up! It's well worth the early wake-up. While soaking in the sun's first rays, keep heaven close.

*The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!" Matthew. 8:27*

He is quite capable of calming the storms of life.

# LSUS NEWS

**1ST ANNUAL LSUS**  
**GOLF**  
**OUTING**  
FUNDRAISER BENEFITING LUTHERAN SOUTH UNITY SCHOOL

**TICKET**  
**\$65**  
PER PERSON



**AUGUST**  
**8<sup>TH</sup> 2025**  
**11 AM**

**18 HOLE FLORIDA**  
**SCRAMBLE**  
LUNCH PROVIDED | CASH BAR AVAILABLE ON COURSE

**MCMILLEN PARK**  
3900 HESSEN CASSEL RD.,  
FORT WAYNE, IN 46806

**REGISTER**  
**NOW**

  
SCAN ME

<http://bit.ly/3FJokEq>



LUTHERAN SOUTH  
UNITY SCHOOL



School  
Registration

LSUS registration is continuing for the 2025-2026 school year at Lutheran South Unity School. We are still looking for more students who would like to join our school family. Call Barb Johnson or the office at LSUS (260-744-0459) to make an appointment for a tour. Then the registration process will be explained to you. To help with tuition, we take Choice Vouchers. We also have scholarships and financial aid available. Someone is in the office Monday - Friday 9:00am to 3:00pm. Make your appointment now.

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## ANNUAL CAMP LUTHERHAVEN CHICKEN DINNER

Sunday, July 20, 2025. Worship begins at 11:00am. Our new directors: Keith Peters as Executive Director and Andrew Schroeder as Director of Summer & Youth Ministry be installed during the worship service. Following worship, join us for our annual Chicken Dinner, complete with mouthwatering chicken, delicious sides, and yummy desserts served in the open air pavilion along the shores of Lake Muncie. Tickets can be purchased at the door for \$17 for Adults (age 13+), \$12 for Youth (age 6-12), and Children 5 & Under are free.

**Come for the worship. Stay for the chicken.**  
**Leave with a full heart.**

WWW.LUTHERHAVEN.ORG



# FESTIVAL MUSIC SERVICE

## LIVE PERFORMANCE

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Martini's Organ

SATURDAY, 12 JULY 2025 | 01:30 PM

Martini Lutheran Church  
333 Moeller Road, New Haven, IN 46774



In July 1925 Martini Lutheran Church purchased, installed, and dedicated a brand new Tracker Organ. One hundred years later that same organ, still leads the saints gathered at Martini every Sunday morning. In thanksgiving to God for His gift of musical singing led by our 100 year old organ, Martini will be hosting a Festival Music Service with Kantor Matthew Machemer of Concordia Theological Seminary as organist. Refreshments will be served following the musical service. Please join us!

blessed  
IS THE NATION WHOSE  
GOD IS THE  
lord  
PSALM 33:12



## TENDING TO THE GARDEN OF OUR SOUL

*Art & Music Therapy Camp*

**JULY 21 - 24, 2025**

JUST AS A GARDEN THRIVES WITH  
ADEQUATE LIGHT, WATER, AND NUTRIENTS,  
WE WANT OUR MINDS TO BE GOOD, RICH  
SOIL WHERE THE WORD CAN GROW  
DEEPLY ROOTED, STRONG, AND SECURE.

**13-16 year olds**

**Join us from 9-12 am**

July 21 Fort Wayne Clay • 6742 E State  
July 22-24 Metea Park-8401 Union Chapel Rd

art \* music \* Scripture \* discussion \* tools &  
techniques for healthy bodies, minds, and spirits

**CONTACT CROSS CONNECTIONS  
TO REGISTER BY JULY 14 {\$30}**  
(260)373-0213

[officemanager@crossconnectionsounseling.com](mailto:officemanager@crossconnectionsounseling.com)







## The Shepherd's Hand Community Outreach Center

1231 S. Anthony Blvd. Fort Wayne, IN 46803

[www.shepherdshandfw.org](http://www.shepherdshandfw.org)

[shepherdshandfwed@gmail.com](mailto:shepherdshandfwed@gmail.com)

Dear Bethlehem,

Thank you so much for blessing The Shepherd's Hand Community Outreach Center with your generous gift of feminine hygiene products. We are so grateful to have your support and partnership. Your support has made a meaningful impact on our ministry and the families we serve—especially through our 5K Family Run/Walk event and Spring Health Fair.

We are deeply grateful for your partnership with this little ministry that God is using in big ways. This year, we were thrilled to have 132 participants, marking a 40% increase from last year! Thanks to your support and others like you, we were also able to meet our fundraising goal of \$10,000.

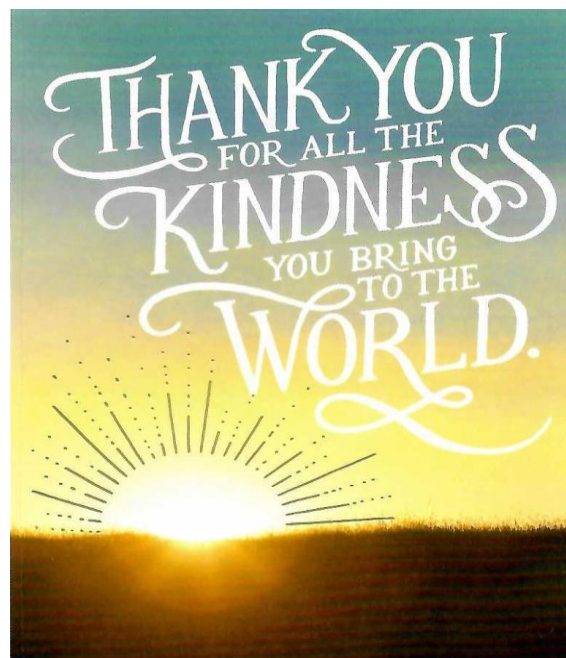
Our Spring Health Fair was truly a blessing! We were honored to serve families from 11 zip codes, reaching 115 families, giving away over 100 feminine hygiene products, and distributing over 4,500 diapers! 🧻

Our amazing nurses stayed busy providing blood pressure and glucose checks, and our volunteers made sure everything ran smoothly. The event was a great success—thanks to the support of our dedicated team and the wonderful community members who stopped by.

Your generosity helps us continue to be the hands and feet of Christ in our community. Thank you again for walking (and running!) alongside us.

With gratitude,

*Jana Peters*  
Deaconess Jana Peters, ED



6/15/2025  
Dear Members of Bethlehem,  
Thank you for all the prayers for me, get well wishes, cards, and delicious meals provided to my family after my recent surgery. Your thoughtfulness has aided my healing. God has been very merciful to me and I thank and praise Him for that.

Your sister-in-Christ,  
Shirley Davis

**Draft, not yet approved by the Board**  
**Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Board of Directors Regular Monthly Meeting**  
**June 10, 2025**

Members present: Pastor Ben Ahlersmeyer, Evans Branigan, Dan Bates, Rachele Dance, Blake Sebring, Greg Shediack, David Schult and John Stafford      Members absent: Brian Bates      Guests: Dena Schult

The June regular monthly meeting of the Board was opened at 6:34 PM by President Greg Shediack. Pastor Ben provided an opening devotion based on Hebrews 12: 2 – the differences between guilt and shame. Jesus walks toward shame and not away from it. In Christ, shame does not get the final word, redemption does. Pastor closed the devotion with prayer.

The minutes from the Board's May, 2025 regular monthly meeting were unanimously approved as submitted, on a motion from John Stafford and a second from Dan Bates.

The Soul Accounting report as forwarded from the Board of Elders included the May 10, 2025 death of Deb Christensen and the May 25, 2025 receiving of Mark Vosmeier as a new member.

In Treasurer Brian Bates' absence, Greg presented the May Financial Report. Monthly income for May was \$35,512 compared with a budgeted amount of \$26,833. Income from offerings through the first five months of the year totaled \$141,086 and total income including miscellaneous receipts and extraordinary income totaled \$161,601. Monthly expenses for May totaled \$30,211, compared with monthly budget amount of \$30,744. Expenses for the year through May totaled \$160,967. The balance in the Endowment Fund at the end of May was \$1,353,471. That portion of the Endowment Fund resting with the Lutheran Foundation was current through April as we had not yet received the May statement. The month-end balance in the SSMG Fund was \$24,570. Greg also presented a report illustrating actual expenses compared with budgeted amounts for the major categories of the Operating Budget. Through May, we expended 39.84 percent of the budgeted expenses. The monthly Treasurer's Report as submitted by Brian was unanimously adopted on a motion by Greg Shediack and a second by Rachele Dance.

Pastor's report provided a review of the end of the LSUS school year, with the last couple of weeks being conducted at Bethlehem due to plumbing back-up issues at the LSUS facility. He noted that LSUS did send janitorial staff to Bethlehem to complete clean-up of the spaces used by the school. Pastor also reviewed the plans for the Summer Clubhouse to return to Bethlehem this year after an absence of several years. The funding for this program has changed since they last used our facility and biblical teaching can now be included in the program under the new funding arrangements. The Clubhouse will run from June 16<sup>th</sup> through July 18<sup>th</sup>.

Pastor Ben, Blake Sebring, and John Stafford provided an update on the work of the Community Center Committee. The grant application to Sacred Places is nearly ready for submission and the request will be for the items as presented at the Voters Assembly. The application will be for approximately \$66,000 and, if we are successful, we will need to raise \$1 dollar in match for every \$2 awarded by Sacred Places. Blake provided an update on upcoming meetings with individuals/groups that continue to express interest in partnering with us.

The Board next reviewed the discussions which took place at the June 1<sup>st</sup> Voters Assembly, particularly focusing on the next steps to implement the Mission, Vision and Values statements adopted at the Assembly. It was noted that this responsibility would primarily fall to the Board of Directors and the Board of Elders and the need to coordinate proposed activities with those planned for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Lastly, Pastor presented a request from Matt's Rack to relocate from Concordia Lutheran High School to Bethlehem. This program provides used uniforms to Lutheran school students. Their use of space at Bethlehem would be of low impact. The Board asked Pastor to move forward in accommodating this request.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Evans Branigan moved and Dan Bates seconded a motion for adjournment. After closing with prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Submitted in His service,  
John Stafford, Secretary

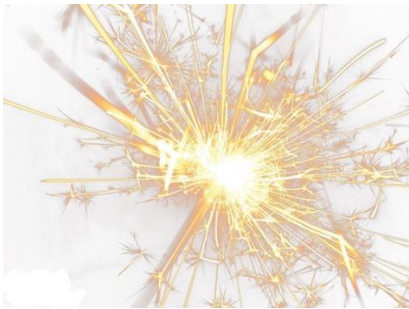


## JULY BIRTHDAYS

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 – Carolyn Knox          | 15 – Matthew Jenkins     |
| 2 – Deanna Nelson         | Michael Johnson          |
| 3 – Kaleah Hopkins        | Olivia Smith             |
| Fannie Moore              | 17 – Tina Adamonis       |
| David Schult              | 18 – Margaret Burger     |
| Linda Witte               | 19 – Janet Blessing      |
| 4 – Juanita Jennings      | Daniel Duffy             |
| 7 – Boualinh Vongphachanh | 20 – Michael Oberholtzer |
| 9 – Mandy Martinsky       | Sataria White            |
| 10 – Doris Scott          | 24 – Craig Bradley       |
| 12 – Lam Duong            | Antonio Jones            |
| Jayna Holmes              | Glenda Starks            |
| Carson Hutchinson         | 25 – DJ Nungester        |
| Yohanes Lee               | Zahara Nungester         |
| Jaide Tucker              | 26 – Elliot Ferguson     |
| 13 – Sophia Grant         | 27 – Carlos Magadan      |
| 14 – Mary Ellen Emley     | 29 – Briauna Crawford    |
| Andrew Thomas             | 30 – Dan Scheerer        |
|                           | 31 – Ronald Gallmeyer    |

## JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 – David and Dena Schult (65)  
 11 – Craig and Jennifer Bradley (5)  
 15 – Pastor Jeffrey and Vicky Geisler (42)  
 28 – Eddie and Nancy Pierce (24)  
 30 – Steve and Lenka Bercot (58)



***“Sometimes the strength within you is not a big fiery flame for all to see, it is just a tiny spark that whispers softly ‘You got this, keep going.’” – Unknown***

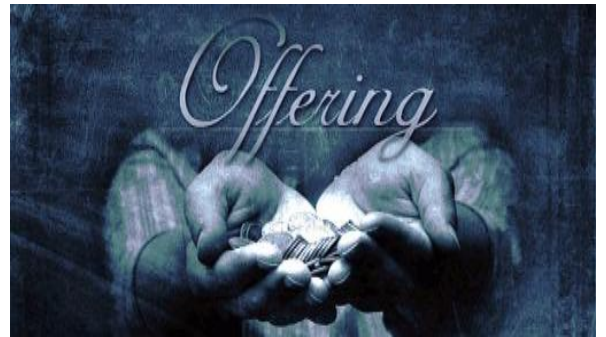


If you have had a change in home address, home or cell phone number or email address, please be sure to let us know so that we can update our database.

If your children have moved out on their own please provide the office with their updated information.

**We want to stay in touch, so having accurate contact information is important to us.**

Please call, mail, or email the church office with any updates.



**Offerings may be mailed to the church at Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

**3705 South Anthony Boulevard,  
Fort Wayne, IN 46806**

**You can make gifts directly on our website. It's simple and secure.**

**Visit our website to see how easy it is!**

**[www.bethlehemlcms.org](http://www.bethlehemlcms.org)**



**online WORSHIP**

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# JULY Servant Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Altar Guild</u>	<u>Elder</u>	<u>Head Usher</u>	<u>Lay Readers</u>	<u>Power point</u>	<u>Live Stream</u>
5	Sharon Dietrich Suzie Emley Amber Herndon	Brian Bates			Carla Johnson	
6		John Bates	Ron Gallmeyer	Glenn Emley	Josiah Hapner	Randy Hapner
12	Kim Ellison Sharon Shediack	Ed Ramos			Charlotte Ratliff	
13		Greg Shediack	Evans Branigan	Suzie Emley	Allison Cheng	Josiah Hapner
19	Linda Stafford	Peter Schlie			Blake Sebring	
20		Peter Schlie	Dan Bates	Donna Melcher Threasa Lightning	Aaron Brown	Joshua Hapner
26	Mary Snow Allison Cheng	Michael Johnson			Carla Johnson	
27		John Bates	Ron Gallmeyer	Peter Schlie	Josiah Hapner	Dave Volmerding

*The greatest joy that I know in this life  
is **SERVING** the Lord.*

# July 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 6:30pm - Bd. of Elders	2	3	4	5 8:30am Men's Bible Study <b>4:00pm Worship w/Comm</b>
	Summer Clubhouse					
6 <b>9:00am Worship w/Comm</b> 10:30am Education Hour	7	8 6:30pm – Bd. of Directors	9	10	11	12 8:30am Men's Bible Study <b>4:00pm Worship w/Comm</b>
	Summer Clubhouse					
13 <b>9:00am Worship w/Comm</b> 10:30am Education Hour	14	15	16	17	18	19 8:30am Men's Bible Study <b>4:00pm Worship w/Comm</b>
	Summer Clubhouse					WOB Summer Social
20 <b>9:00am Worship w/Comm</b> 10:30am Education Hour	21	22	23	24	25	26 8:30am Prayer Breakfast <b>4:00pm Worship w/Comm</b>
27 <b>9:00am Worship w/Comm</b> 10:30am Education Hour	28	29 6:30pm – Bd. Of Property	30	31		