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From the Pastor's Desk



Finding Our Rhythm Again

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” - Ecclesiastes 3:1

Does anyone else feel like 2025 has been a little off? Maybe it's just me, but I can't seem to settle into any kind of rhythm. The moment I think I've found my footing, something throws it all off again—federal holidays, weather delays, school cancellations, sickness running rampant in my home and at school. It's been one thing after another, and I know I'm not the only one feeling it. Please tell me I'm not the only one!

We are creatures of habit. Predictability is comfortable for most. We settle into routines, and when those get disrupted, it throws everything off balance. Maybe you've felt it too—that sense that the days are getting away from you, that you're always playing catch-up, that things just aren't clicking like they should. And when life feels unsteady, it's easy to drift spiritually too. Prayer gets squeezed out. Worship becomes optional. The weeks blur together, and suddenly, we feel disconnected—from God, from one another, even from ourselves.

And then comes Lent. Right on time.

Most of us pastors shudder at the sight of it showing up on our calendars but I honestly am craving it. One of the great gifts of the liturgical calendar is that it gives us a rhythm—a way of marking time that isn't controlled by our schedules or obligations, but by Christ. And Lent, in particular, is a season that slows us down and reorients us. It's a reset. A realignment. A time when we step into a rhythm given to us rather than one we try to force on our own.

This rhythm is not meant to be a burden but a gift. The extra worship services, the disciplines of prayer and fasting, the intentional reflection—all of it is designed to pull us out of the chaos of life and place us firmly where we belong: with Christ, in His Word, among His people. Walking at His pace. St. Augustine once said, “You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.” That restlessness we feel? That disjointed, unsettled, off-balance feeling? It's a sign that we need to be re-centered in Him.

So I'm taking my time this month to encourage you to join me—step into the rhythm of Lent this year. Do all the things you've grown accustomed to and don't be afraid to start some new traditions. Don't let this season pass you by. Let it be the thing that steadies you, that brings you back to what matters most. Make worship a priority. Set aside time for prayer. Engage the season together at Bethlehem. Not because it's just another thing to do, but because this is how God resets us—by bringing us back, again and again, to His presence.

May God bless us all as we enter into this most holy season, where Christ walks the road we could not walk, bears the sin we could not bear, and gives the life we could not earn—all so that we might be made new in Him.

Lent is here. And with it, the invitation to find our rhythm again.

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)

**March 2, 2025 – Transfiguration of Our Lord
Changed by the Mountain - Deuteronomy 34:1-12**

Rev. William Mueller

Transfiguration Sunday is the day to remember the moment Jesus revealed His glory to Peter, James, and John. It was high upon a mountain. Two other “mountain climbers” – Moses and Elijah – appeared with the quartet. The account of Moses’ death upon Mt. Nebo, and his reappearance with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, invites us to see how we, too, are changed by the mountain.

**March 5, 2025 – Ash Wednesday
Can God Really Forgive Me? – Psalm 51**

Rev. Craig Muehler (Guest Pastor)

Are you ready for a journey through Lent? God’s mercy and forgiveness are real and powerful. God shows us His love and mercy in His dealing with King David. We are reminded that our Lord, in His mercy, also forgives all repentant sinners like us.

This program will be released on Ash Wednesday on our digital platforms: WorshipAnew.org - Mobile App - TV Apps – YouTube – Facebook

**March 9, 2025 – First Sunday in Lent
It Is Written - Luke 4:1-13**

Rev. Paul Shoemaker

Jesus, the sinless Son of God, took upon Himself all of our sins and paid the price for our forgiveness, in full, on Calvary’s cross. Jesus resisted Satan’s temptations and, in so doing, showed us how we, too, can resist. We turn to God’s Holy Word and rebuke Satan saying, “It is written.”

**March 16, 2025 – Second Sunday in Lent
Celestial Civics - Philippians 3:20**

Rev. Dr. Thomas Ahlersmeyer

Lent powerfully reminds us that we don’t belong here, that we hold heavenly citizenship. Today we learn of the privileges and responsibilities, the pitfalls and opportunities, of celestial citizenship.

**March 23, 2025 – Third Sunday in Lent
Discipline From the Lord – Psalm 85**

Rev. Dr. Walter Maier III

We are all sinners. This means that, at times, we will receive discipline from the Lord. But rejoice! This discipline comes from the love of God and is for our good. This is corrective discipline; it is blessed discipline.

**March 30, 2025 – Fourth Sunday in Lent
The Prodigal Father - Luke 15:11b**

Rev. Thomas Eggold

When we return to our Lord in our sin, our heavenly Father is always there, arms wide open, ready to restore us to the family. Our sin is great and deserves nothing but punishment, but His grace is greater. Despite our sin, He continues to love us, He continues to seek us out, and He continues to deal with us with the love and mercy made possible in Jesus.



Sign up to volunteer!

Opportunities to serve lunch every 4th Sunday of the month at the Rescue Mission are available. You can find the sign-up sheet and additional information on what to expect on the bulletin board just outside the Book Nook library.



We are looking for volunteers for those Sundays, and with anyone wanting to donate a dessert to be served along with lunch. Contact either Randy Hapner @ 260-745-7477 or Ruth Bates @260-417-0600 if you have further questions.



Join us for Easter Breakfast down at the Cafeteria, April 20th. Watch for details in upcoming bulletins and the April Messenger



Food Bank Report

By Sharon Shediack

January

We provided food to 355 individuals. They included 168 children under the age of 18, and 51 individuals over the age of 60. Our congregation provided 392# of food. We went to Community Harvest three times this month to purchase 1,721# of food in the amount of \$599. Our 158 volunteers gave 91 hours of their time.

We could use soup, pasta sauce, rice and tomato products. 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
Mac and Cheese
Pasta Sauces

The work of our missionaries is a magnificent expression of the Lord's redeeming love.

Bethlehem Mission News

By Jane Miller

As I write this on Monday, February 24, Joe Boway's work and travel partner, Jon Frank, from the Tri-Cities (Saginaw, Bay City, and Midland), Michigan area, begins his trip from Flint. Since he's a Frank from that Bavarian immigration part of my home town area, I'm wondering if he might be at least distant cousin of our dear Ren Frank, teacher and music director for many years at Bethlehem. Ren was from Frankenmuth, and close by there was also Frankentrost and Frankenlust! Anyway, Jon Frank will be working on a construction project with Joe at the Gaye Town Lutheran School and then travel by roads and MAF Cessna plane to other rural schools to visit classrooms. Then they both will fly back to the capital city of Monrovia on March 6, and then both start their trips back to the US on March 8. Please continue prayers for Joe's wife Glendora and sons Joe Jr and Joshua during Joe's absence! And pray for Joe and Jon in both their road and plane travels, for safety in the construction process and for productive and encouraging visits to the rural Lutheran schools to visit and give encouragement to the teachers and students!

In latter January we got an update from Joe and Suzy Schlie with Cru Arts and Culture. I quote here an opening statement and Scripture from Joe: "As we enter our 36th and 32nd years of ministry with Cru, we cannot help but give thanks for God's gracious hand to us through you. The Apostle Paul writes in Philippians 1: "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it out to completion until the day of Jesus Christ." "With that in mind, Suzy is participating with more than 100 people from around the world in a weekly course about prayer. For the next few months, each Tuesday she will join with them in times that will include learning about prayer and practicing prayer. The example of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, where he asked his closest disciples to watch and pray with Him, compels us to ask you to join Suzy and me in praying for her and with her during these days of learning and growth. Also, we have been hearing from some of our former students who have served for many years overseas as missionaries with Cru. Unfortunately, they are having to leave their 2nd country in the past few years because of having their visas cancelled. It is difficult to watch as people are kicked out of their countries of residence. It is scary for them and their children as their local governments use fear and intimidation. Please keep these friends and colleagues in your prayers!" Please join Joe, Suzy and me in praying for these discouraged missionaries and their families as they are forced to leave countries in sensitive, anti-Christian countries, that the Lord would keep them safe and show them the next steps He has for them! And may we all be more committed to stand with them in prayer and intercession!

We also got the latest issue of the "Miller Mailer" - Scripture Engagement Ministry in Southeast Asia - from Tim and Michelle last week. This ministry also takes place in a country that is not open to the Gospel; but there have been encouraging openings to share the Father's love and Word in their heart languages! We had also learned personally from Tim and Michelle that Michelle's dad, Don Kovac, over visiting with them, had come down with RSV and Pneumonia and needed to be taken to Thailand where there was better medical care and the specialists he needed. He is finally out of the woods now; please pray for his continued recovery and strength! Thankfully, his and our oldest granddaughter, Ellyn, has been able to stay and will be able to accompany him back to his home in Florida.

Mission Prayers

Team Prayers for them in 2025:

*Khon Sundays School Training: Pray for wisdom and protection for our Khon SE team as they travel to various provinces to lead 2-day workshops for young teachers and elders. Pray that the new set of 22 stories from Acts will lead to growth in faith, character and added believers of all ages.

*Southern Training: Pray also as the SE team will lead workshops in using our national language curriculum from the OT to teachers from 20 churches in the south in early March!

*Bible Project Theme videos: Our media team will continue work on new videos including "The Messiah" and a Gospel of Luke series: pray especially for wisdom in scrip translation and developing skill in various audio and video production efforts.

"As you are led by the Spirit in your prayers for this work, please know that your partnership is vital for us and our teams! May He lead you daily in Christ's wisdom, love and grace! With love in Christ,"

Tim and Michelle



EDUCATION HOUR

10:30am-11:30am



MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

MARCH 29

The prophet Obadiah received a vision from the Lord about Israel's neighbor Edom. The Edomites were descendants of Esau, the older son of Isaac and Rebekah and a grandson of Abraham. Edom's history provides the background of Obadiah's book and helps us understand the Lord's message to us in Obadiah.

You are welcome to join us at the Men's Prayer Breakfast in the Bethlehem cafeteria on Saturday, March 29, at 8:30am as we have breakfast and pray together, hear a devotion from Bill Ihssen, and delve into the Word of God.

"This is what the Sovereign LORD says about Edom . . . 'See, I will make you small among the nations; you will be utterly despised.'" Obadiah 1a, 2 NIV.

Hiding God's Word

in our hearts

Sonshine Club 2024 - 2025



Children ages 3yrs + are invited to join us in the Sonshine Club room after Sunday worship from 10:30-11:30.

We'll be digging into God's promises for us all throughout the Bible beginning in Genesis!

THY WORD IS A
LAMP *unto my* FEET
AND A LIGHT UNTO MY
PATH

PSALMS 119:105

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.

March is Self-Harm Awareness Month

What does SELF-HARM mean: self-harm or self-mutilation, is the act of deliberately infliction pain and damage to one's own body. Self-harm most often refers to cutting, burning, scratching, and other forms of external injury; it can however, also include internal or emotional harm, such as consuming toxic amounts of alcohol or drugs.

Why People Hurt Themselves: the roots of self-harming behavior are often found in early childhood trauma, including physical, verbal, or sexual abuse. It may also be an indication of other serious mental health issues that are independent of trauma, such as depression, anxiety, or borderline personality disorder.

Who is most likely to Self-Harm: ADULTS least likely only about 5%. TEENS have highest rate about 17%. COLLEGE STUDENTS about 15%. WOMEN vs. MEN women self-harm at least 35% of total cases, men more likely to underreport self-harm. SEXUAL MINORITIES, gay, bi-sexual people are at high risk.

AGE OF ONSET: Average age is 13. This represents a time of great physical, social, mental change and development. Also time linked to emergence of MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS like anxiety and depression.

HOW CAN WE HELP: Responding with compassion - Recognizing that self-harm is an attempt at coping with painful feelings - is the first step. Next encourage to seek help, assist in finding other outlets of feelings, and make yourself available to listen if needed. There are many HELP organizations in Ft. Wayne and surrounding area.

As in Jonah 4:3-4: *"just kill me now Lord! I'd rather be dead than alive in what I predicted will not happen."*
The Lord replied, "it is right for you to be angry about this?"

God has said you are allowed to feel every emotion. God is never mad about struggles, BUT come to God when you feel out of control emotionally so He can help you with your heart. He is like a Gardener who pulls weeds in your heart---weeds---that will keep you from growing in faith. Don't be afraid to go to God, He knows your heart better than you do and will perform spiritual heart surgery so your heart can be free to love!!

We can show God's love in many ways,
BE THERE, LISTEN, HUG,
TAKE TO GET HELP, and PRAY!!!
We are God's love here on earth!!
GOD LOVES US ALL!!!!



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 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)

BETHLEHEM'S 100th ANNIVERSARY "Throughout All Generations"

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



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

*Kick-off: Sunday, January 11, 2026 (same month as the first meeting of the church)

*Education Celebration: Sunday, May 31, 2026 (History of education and recognition of Confirmation classes)

*Main Event - Sunday, September. 27, 2026 Tent service

To honor Bethlehem's 100th anniversary in 2026, we offer an opportunity to participate in a second videotaping session on April 13 from 1-4 in the sanctuary.

These 5-minute videos 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?

Understanding that everyone could talk for an hour, we are asking to keep the sessions to five minutes so we can include more people. These recordings will be played before services throughout the anniversary year. Those being interviewed also do not need to be current members.

If you are interested, please email Blake Sebring at blakeds@frontier.com so we can get a rough estimate of those wishing to participate. Seating will be available, and we will not schedule appointments, but we'll start a line and keep going until we are finished. Hopefully this will be a fun time of reminiscing.



WOMEN of BETHLEHEM



National: lwml.org
State/Local: lwmlindiana.org

Mark Your Calendars

Let's Go!
to Omaha, NE!

We're off to the LWML Convention!
June 25-29, 2025

If you'd like to take the bus with us, email Emily at
emily12rogers6@gmail.com

Approximately \$200 a person
Intent to join
deadline: August 25

2025 Convention



Date: June 26–29, 2025

Location: Omaha, Nebraska

Convention Center: CHI Health Center,
455 N 10th St, Omaha, NE, 68102

Theme: Growing in God's Grace

Scripture Verse: *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen (2 Peter 3:18).*



EASTER – April 20, 2025

LILIES @ \$25.00

NAME _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

DEADLINE FOR ORDERING – March 24, 2025

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

**MAIL WITH FORM TO: 3705 SOUTH ANTHONY BLVD,
FORT WAYNE IN 46806**

OR GIVE TO AN USHER. (NO PHONE ORDERS, PLEASE)

LILIES CAN BE PICKED UP AFTER THE 10:00 CHURCH SERVICE ON EASTER



The Joyful Corner

What an Opportunity!

Written by Past LWML President Linda Reiser, Grand Island, Nebraska

Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League, 2019

Serve the LORD with gladness! (Psalm 100:2a)

Have you had a unique opportunity in your life? Perhaps you have been blessed to attend college, to advance in your job, to travel to a special part of the world on a mission trip, or to use your skills and passion to help people in your community. Opportunity is defined as “a favorable juncture of circumstances,” “an occasion or situation which makes it possible to do something, or the possibility of doing something” (Cambridge English Dictionary and Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary 2018).

Whatever opportunities you have enjoyed, today there is an opportunity for each of us. That opportunity or “possibility of doing something” is Lent! Lent is an opportunity. Lent is a favorable juncture of time where we are given the gift of 40 days to prepare for Easter. This opportunity begins on Ash Wednesday. For 40 weekdays, we pause, remember, and contemplate what God has done and continues to do for us. So, what might be your “opportunity” this Lenten season?

Lent may mean attending Lenten services where we focus on repentance. When we fully repent, God graciously forgives our sins and releases us from the guilt and sorrow our sins cause us. Knowing God forgives our sins for Jesus' sake, we are filled with joy and thanksgiving that leads us to abundant praise and worship for our great God.

Lent may also mean giving up something. Fasting is one such way to do this. In Matthew 6:16–18, Jesus talks about the proper way to fast. For some, giving up a type of food or other item for the Lenten season is a daily and constant reminder for them of Jesus' total sacrifice for us when He gave up His life on the cross to rescue us from sin and eternal death.

But instead of giving up something for Lent, this season can also be an opportunity for each of us to also consider what we can add to our lives that is good. A good addition might be to write notes (40 of them for each day in the Lenten season) to thank people in your life or tell them you are thinking of them and praying for them that day. Another good addition might mean reading a different psalm each day of Lent as your daily prayer. The Lenten season can be an opportunity to rise and shine 15 minutes early and spend the time in God's presence or even give up a 30-minute television show to add more time in His Word. Or motivated by Christ's own acts of kindness and love, you might wish to do an act of kindness for others.

Another something we can add during Lent might be to find items in your home, maybe even 40 of them, to give to a service organization in your community that can give them to help those in need. Or perhaps you could encourage members of your family to share some “out of the normal” nice things with one another. For example, instead of just saying “Thank you” or “Good job,” take the opportunity to tell your spouse, “I love how you help with the kids.” Or tell your kids, “I love how you work hard on your homework,” or “I love how you make others feel they are special.”

The Lenten season can be a new opportunity for you, “an occasion to do something” memorable and meaningful. Whether you choose to give up something or choose to add something good, spend time in prayer and thanksgiving as the joyous celebration of Jesus' resurrection approaches. Ask the Holy Spirit to use your Lenten “opportunity” to prepare your heart for Easter in a way that is meaningful and that deepens your relationship with God. Enjoy your opportunity this Lenten season!

Serve the Lord
with *joy*

LSUS NEWS



OPEN ENROLLMENT 2025- 2026

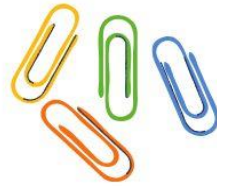
DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS LOOKING
FOR A GREAT SCHOOL?

LUTHERAN SOUTH UNITY SCHOOL WOULD
LOVE TO SHARE OUR CHRIST-CENTERED
SCHOOL WITH YOU.

TOURS ARE AVAILABLE SO WE CAN SHARE
HOW OUR SCHOOL CAN BENEFIT YOUR CHILD.

CONTACT BARB JOHNSON -- ADMISSIONS
BJOHNSON@LSUSFW.ORG
260-744-0459

RE-ENROLLMENT FOR CURRENT LSUS
FAMILIES IS ON FAST DIRECT NOW.



Kindergarten ROUND UP

Thursday, March 6th, 2025 @ 6 – 7 PM

Where: Lutheran South Unity School
5401 South Calhoun Street
260-744-0459

What to Expect: Children welcome to come!

- Kindergarten scavenger hunt
- New Families tour of the school
- Repeat families meet with kindergarten teachers and principal — learn about the program.

We look forward to hearing from your family!
RSVP by phone or use the QR code to LSUS today!



CLHS NEWS

Fine Arts Festival and Food Trucks

March 23, 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Come join us for art, food and fun as we see the best of our Lutheran school student's creative endeavors at the Concordia Lutheran High School Fine Arts Festival! Enjoy treats from three food trucks including **Whip & Chill, Another One Bites the Crust, and Big Eyed Fish**. Come inside and peruse student artwork and fine arts projects. You'll also be treated to a concert by multiple Lutheran school choirs, bands and orchestras. Concordia colleges will also be on site for a Concordia University Fair! The festival will end in a fine art awards ceremony. We'll see you there!

Concordia Announces Co-Valedictorians and Salutatorian

Our high school would like to congratulate three outstanding scholars from the class of 2025. Mr. Jack Habegger and Miss Ellie Walters have been named the Valedictorians of the Class of 2025 and Miss Cameryn McConkey has been named the Salutatorian. These three exceptional students have performed exemplarily inside the classroom taking a rigorous course load that was filled with both AP and Honors courses. We commend them for their dedication to academic excellence and are proud of their prestigious accomplishment.



LENTEN MEALS ARE BACK!

Meals will begin at 5:15pm and end at 6:15pm in the Fellowship Hall. PB&J for kids and kids-at-heart.

BETHLEHEM LENTEN DINNERS MENU

March 5 – Chili cook-off at Peace Lutheran Church (**WORSHIP IS AT BETHLEHEM at 6:30pm**)

March 12 - *The First Temptation Dinner* - Stone Soup, Bread, and fruits.

Need: Beef Veggie Soup, bread, and fruit salad.

March 19 - *Sleepy Disciples Dinner* - Turkey Tetrazinni, mashed potatoes, green beans. Turkey Tetrazinni (Kasey will make). Need: Mashed potatoes, green beans, dessert.

March 26 - *Take-Out Night* – Pizza Need: Pizza, carrots/ranch, fruit, dessert.

April 2 - *The Rooster crows Dinner* - Chicken Noodle Soup, Bread, and Salad

Need: Chicken Noodle Soup, Bread, Salad, dessert.

April 9 - *Mockary Mess Hall* - breakfast for dinner Sheet Pan "Pancakes" (Kasey will make). Need: syrup, sausages, fruit salad.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR LENT - EASTER

Wednesday 6:30pm services

ASH WEDNESDAY March 5 - Midweek Lent 1- 6:30pm

March 12 - Midweek Lent 2 – 6:30pm

March 19 - Midweek Lent 3– 6:30pm

March 26 - Midweek Lent 4– 6:30pm

April 2 – Midweek 5 – 6:30

April 9 - Midweek Lent 6– 6:30pm

April 17 - Maundy (Holy) Thursday - 6:30pm

April 18 - Good Friday - 6:30pm

April 19 – Easter Vigil 4:00pm

April 20 - Easter Sunday service 10:00am

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Thank you, Bethlehem Prayer Warriors, for your prayers for Baby Matthew Derby. Our Bethlehem family has been praying for our friends' little boy since he was born 2 years ago. Although Matthew was born full term and healthy, it quickly became apparent that there was a problem. After many tests, Matthew was found to have an extremely rare genetic condition called Pura Syndrome.

Matthew recently celebrated his 2nd birthday. He has been growing by leaps and bounds over the past year. Some big wins for Miracle Matthew over the past year include: greater stability with independent sitting and reaching; playing with his feet; using his tongue and mouth to make sounds; saying "Mama"; shaking/nodding his head in response to questions; overall improvement with swallowing & chewing coordination; finding his pointer finger; grasping toys at mid-line with both hands; greater endurance with weight bearing through arms and legs; standing independently for moments, graduating from a 3-week DMI (dynamic movement intervention) therapy intensive in September and **TAKING HIS FIRST ASSISTED STEPS** while there; gaining up to 6 sign words and using them with his sisters to "tell" and not just respond. And these are just the big ones! We thank God for Matthew's continual progress and are trusting God for Matthew's healing. Please continue to pray for Matthew, his parents and his 3 big sisters who love him dearly!



Bethlehem's 100th Anniversary

Bethlehem's 100th Anniversary committee members (Pastor Ben Ahlersmeyer, Rachele Dance and Sharon Dietrich) have been meeting and are now requesting needed volunteers for the following committees:

Commemorative items: **NEED** someone to coordinate

T-shirt, book bag, coffee cup, ink pen bookmark, etc.

Communication/Publicity: Phyllis Reinking and Barb Netterville are volunteering to telephone, etc., need a coordinator

100th Anniversary Directory: Rhonda Cheng needs several helpers

Education Celebration: Requesting a leader

Historical Writing: Donna Volmerding is willing to serve. Need others to help with the writing of events since 2012

Historical relics: Linda Stafford and Sharon Shediack are willing to coordinate. Need additional volunteers.

Human Care: ChristCare, Food Bank, Mental Health Initiative

Need coordinator and volunteers

Interviews: Blake Sebring is coordinating

Meals: Deanna Nelson is coordinating but more helpers needed

THANKOFFERING: raise \$100,000. Ideas and volunteers are **NEEDED**

Worship/Music: Glenn and Suzie Emley volunteered to lead, more servants needed. Ideas: organ concert, Gospel Sing, alumni choir, etc.

Please pray about using your God-given talents to help make the 100th Anniversary a celebration of thanksgiving and gratefulness to our Lord for being with us "THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS." You are **NEEDED**. Thank you.

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Board of Directors Regular Monthly Meeting
January 14, 2025

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

Members absent: none

Guests: Dena Schult

The January 14th regular monthly meeting of the Board was opened at 6:32 PM by President Greg Shediack. Pastor Ben provided an opening devotion based on Isaiah 43:1-7; we are God's chosen people and He never forgets us. Pastor closed the devotion with prayer.

The minutes from the Board's December, 2024 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 approved by the Board of Elders at its January meeting, was reviewed by the Board. It included the baptism of Remington Nelson on December 22nd, 2024 and the passing of Regine (Jenny) Guenin on January 6, 2025.

Brian Bates presented the December and Year-End Financial Report. Monthly income for December was \$40,969 compared with a budgeted amount of \$26,833. Income for the year was \$465,474 compared with a budgeted amount of \$480,120. This included congregation giving of \$342,326; Endowment Fund withdrawals of \$85,000; SSMG Fund withdrawals of \$37,000; and extraordinary income of \$1,148. Monthly expenses for December totaled \$34,499, compared with monthly budget amounts of \$40,010. Expenses for the year were \$467,427 compared with a budgeted amount of \$480,120. The balance in the Endowment Fund at the end of December was \$1,356,488. The balance reflected the November ending balance in the funds held with the Lutheran Foundation as the more recent statement had not yet been received. The year-end balance in the SSMG Fund was \$25,847. Brian also presented a report illustrating actual expenses compared with budgeted amounts for the major categories of the Operating Budget. For the year, we expended 97 percent of the budgeted expenses. The monthly Treasurer's Report was unanimously adopted on a motion by Brian Bates and a second by Blake Sebring.

Pastor's report included a review of the various Christmas services; an update noting that the Angel Tree giving supported three families; and an update on his Doctorate of Ministry classes, with this semester including an independent study class.

Pastor Ben, Blake Sebring and John Stafford provided an update on the work of the Community Center Committee. The Board reviewed the draft case statement that will be submitted with our funding request to Sacred Places for a building assessment grant. The Board recapped the January 12th Asset Mapping exercise conducted with the congregation and reviewed a summary of the event as prepared by Blake. Lastly, it was noted that the Committee would be meeting with several groups in early February which have expressed interest in utilizing space in our facility and with increased interaction with our surrounding neighbors.

Under New Business, the Board discussed recreating a Worship Committee to provide input on components of the Saturday and Sunday services.

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

Let all that you do be done in love.
1 Corinthians 16:14

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

2 – Brandon Knox Adam Rice	15 – Doris Holmes
3 – Marilyn Curl Loan Nguyen Mary Ann Oberholtzer	16 – Alexandria Foster-Lightning
4 – Lina Bernabe	17 – Corinne Nahrwold
6 – Lavonda Turner	18 – Charlotte Stewart Austin Williams
11 – Rachel Michael James Soest	21 – Annie Smith
12 – Debra Epperson Kera Roland	25 – Michelle Bearman
13 – Deici Flores Ashley Nelson	26 – Amarah Brown Eva Dressler Ignacio Silva
14 – Seth Ahlersmeyer Krystana Gordon Roman Nelson Brenda Warren	28 – Patsy Dressler Kari Ellison
	31 – Barbara Netterville Claudette Daniels

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

21 – Mark and Janet Blessing



www.myfwl.org



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




ONLINE WORSHIP

<https://www.facebook.com/bethlehemfortwayne>

MARCH 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>
1	Sharon Dietrich Suzie Emley Amber Herndon	Peter Schlie			Charlotte Ratliff	
2		John Bates	Evans Branigan	The Hapner Family	Josiah Hapner	Dave Volmerding
5	Kim Ellison Sharon Shediack		Dan Bates			Randy Hapner
8	Linda Stafford	Michael Johnson			Carla Johnson	
9		Greg Shediack	Ron Gallmeyer	John Stafford Linda Stafford	Allison Cheng	Josiah Hapner
15	Mary Snow Allison Cheng	Brian Bates			Blake Sebring	
16		Peter Schlie	Dan Bates	Glenn Emley	Aaron Brown	Joshua Hapner
22	Sharon Dietrich Suzie Emley Amber Herndon	Ed Ramos			Charlotte Ratliff	
23		John Bates	Evans Branigan	Suzie Emley	Josiah Hapner	Dave Volmerding
29	Kim Ellison Sharon Shediack	Peter Schlie			Blake Sebring	
30		Greg Shediack	Ron Gallmeyer	Donna Melcher Threasa Lightning	Allison Cheng	Randy Hapner

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 8:30am Men's Bible Study 4:00pm Worship w/Comm
2 9:00am Worship w/Comm 10:30am Education Hour	3	4 6:30pm - Bd. of Elders	5 Ash Wednesday 5:15pm Lent Dinner-Peace 6:30 Worship w/Comm 6:00pm - Choir 7:15pm - Handbells	6	7	8 8:30am Men's Bible Study 9:30am Women's Bible Study 4:00pm Worship w/Comm
9 Spring Forward Daylight Savings Time 9:00am Worship w/Comm 10:30am Education Hour	10	11 6:30pm - Bd. of Directors	12 5:15pm Lent Dinner - Café 6:30 Lent Service 6:00pm - Choir 7:15pm - Handbells	13	14	15 8:30am Men's Bible Study 9:30am Women's Bible Study 4:00pm Worship w/Comm
16 9:00am Worship w/Comm 10:30am Education Hour	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19 5:15pm Lent Dinner - Café 6:30 Lent Service 6:00pm - Choir 7:15pm - Handbells	20 First Day of Spring	21	22 8:30am Men's Bible Study 4:00pm Worship w/Comm
23 9:00am Worship w/Comm 10:30am Education Hour	24 Easter Lily deadline Messenger articles due	25	26 5:15pm Lent Dinner - Café 6:30 Lent Service 6:00pm - Choir 7:15pm - Handbells	27	28	29 8:30am Prayer Breakfast 4:00pm Worship w/Comm
30 9:00am Worship w/Comm 10:30am Education Hour	31	