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## From the Pastor's Desk

### Citizens of Heaven

Our Lutheran Confessions teach something called the “Two Kingdoms.” It’s a way of describing how God rules the world in two distinct but complementary ways. On the one hand, God rules through His right hand—the kingdom of the Gospel, where Christ reigns in His Church through forgiveness, grace, and His Word. On the other hand, God rules through His left hand—the kingdom of earthly life, where He gives us government, law, and authority to keep order and protect our neighbors. Both are God’s good gifts. Both matter. And as Christians, we live in both at the same time.

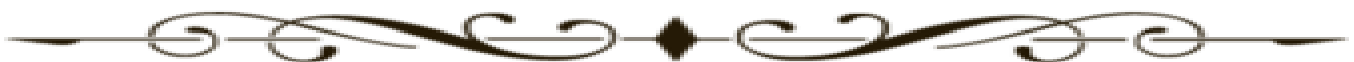
But here’s the key: one of these kingdoms always comes first. It is hard to live in both at the same time but God’s reign and rule in the right hand must always influence our mind and actions in the left. Our true citizenship is not in this world, but in heaven. St. Paul writes: “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20). That heavenly citizenship shapes everything about how we live in this world. Yes, we are called to be engaged here—working, voting, serving, and caring for our communities. But all of that flows out of who we already are in Christ. Our values, our priorities, even the way we interact with people in everyday conversations—these are formed first and foremost by the Gospel.

And that makes all the difference in a time like ours. We live in a world that is increasingly divided, where people feel pulled to one side or another, where politics often become the most important thing. They become the most relevant thing about us. They become our god. But if our truest identity is in Christ, then we don’t need to be swept up in the noise. Instead, we carry heaven’s values into earthly life. That means leading with grace, humility, forgiveness, and love, because those are the gifts Jesus has first given to us. Think about how Jesus came to us—He didn’t remain distant, but entered into our brokenness in the incarnation. He met people where they were: the tax collectors, the outcasts, the sinners. And He met them with mercy and truth. If that’s how our Savior treats us, then that’s how we are called to treat others.

And here’s an important reminder for us at Bethlehem: while we may differ in how we think about politics or policies, those things must never determine how we treat one another in Christ’s Church. The kingdom of the left must never rule our fellowship in the kingdom of the right. Here at the Lord’s Table, we are not Democrats or Republicans, not red or blue—we are brothers and sisters in Christ, forgiven and united in Him. That identity comes first. That identity lasts forever.

So instead of focusing only on the national conversation, let’s begin with the daily interactions right in front of us—with our family, our coworkers, our neighbors, and especially with one another here at Bethlehem. What if we carried our heavenly citizenship into the way we speak, the way we listen, and the way we extend grace to people who may see the world differently? Yes, we live in a divided world. But we belong to a united Kingdom. And it’s from that Kingdom—the Kingdom of Christ—that we receive our true identity, our lasting hope, and our guiding values for how to live and love in this present age. Let’s keep this as our focus with Christ as our model.

Peace 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)**

**October 5, 2025 – Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost  
Fan Into Flame - 2 Timothy 1:1-14**

**Rev. William Mueller**

The Apostle Paul, while imprisoned and most likely very near his upcoming execution, writes one more letter to Pastor Timothy.

Through this text God is reminding us – who are the people He has used in our life to bring and grow us in faith in Jesus Christ? And He is challenging us – who are the people God is using us to encourage and grow someone in faith in Jesus Christ?

*Featured Choirs: St. John Lutheran School, Plymouth, Wis.;*

*Holy Cross Lutheran School, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

*Featured Art and Architecture: St. John's Lutheran Church, Lexington, Ky.*

**October 12, 2025 – Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
Thankful for Being Thankful - Luke 17:11-19**

**Rev. Paul Shoemaker**

The miracle of healing the 10 lepers reminds us of the earthly healing and support we receive from God. The one thankful leper reminds us of the miracle of true faith in Jesus, a faith that heals us eternally.

*Featured Choir: Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

*Featured Art and Architecture: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Hamler, Ohio*

**October 19, 2025 – Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
What Will Jesus Find? - Luke 18:1**

**Rev. Scott Zeckzer**

Prayer is one of the gifts that God has given to us. Sometimes it is easy to pray and other times it seems difficult. The Good News is we always have help when we pray and a loving Father who always listens.

*Featured Choirs: Lincoln Lutheran High School, Lincoln, Neb.; St. Peter's Lutheran School, Fort Wayne, Ind.;*

*Featured Art and Architecture: St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

**October 26, 2025 – Reformation Day “observed”  
In Christ's Word - John 8:31-32**

**Rev. Dr. Daniel Brege (Guest Pastor)**

Christ's Word is what Christians must continually hear. That Word spoken again and again by Jesus includes the harshest Law and then the sweetest Gospel. Martin Luther realized this truth.

*Featured Choir: Choir of the Council of Presidents of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*

*Featured Art and Architecture: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.*



**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).

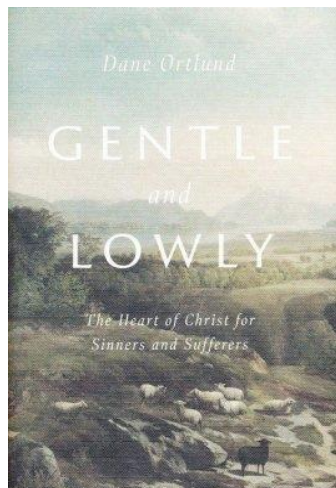


[www.myfwl.org](http://www.myfwl.org)

AND JESUS ANSWERED HIM,  
“IT IS WRITTEN,



# small GROUPS



## **CHURCHWIDE BIBLE STUDY**

**If you ordered a book, they are available in the Church office. The cost of the book is \$10.** We also have a few extra books available for purchase.

There are a several established groups, they include:

- Thursday at Barb Netterville's home – 7:00pm
- Thursday either afternoon or evening - Laurie Hapner
- Men's Saturday group at Lutheran Life Villages - Randy Hapner
- The Sunday group – Ruth Bates - after service
- Monday group - Dena Schult – 7:00pm

Please contact the host for more information.



Volunteers needed every 4th Sunday of the Month - upcoming dates include Oct 26, Nov 23, and Dec. 28. This is a great way to serve our local Ft. Wayne Community. Sign-up at the bulletin board outside the library, just past Fellowship Hall, and make this a meaningful service experience! Can't serve physically? Bake instead!

**We appreciate our volunteers for the Rescue Mission.  
Thank You!**

## **Food Bank Report**

By Sharon Shediack

**August**

We provided food to 349 individuals. They included 145 children under the age of 18, and 50 individuals over the age of 60.

Our congregation provided 769# of food. We went to Community Harvest four times this month to purchase 1990# of food in the amount of \$789.

Our 15 volunteers gave 118 hours of their time.

We could use soup, peanut butter, boxed/packet baking mixes, pasta sauce 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 Soups and Tuna**



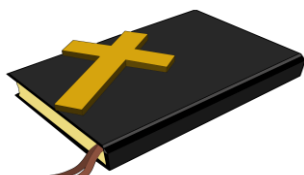
# BETHLEHEM FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY

*"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

\*\*\*\*\*

10:30am-11:30am



### ADULT BIBLE STUDY

During the Gentle and Lowly series, Pastor Ben will be doing a study on the Characteristics of Jesus during the Education Hour in the cafeteria.

## IN CHRIST ALONE

*Sonshine Club 2025 - 2026*

Children ages 3 yrs - 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to join us in the Sonshine Club room during the Education Hour after Sunday worship. Our theme this year will focus on stories of Jesus and how we can live in Him. Parents are always invited to join us and even children under 3 are welcome to participate with a parent present.

# Thank You

*Thank you for your prayers, cards, and support during my time off! God bless and be with you all!*

*Joyce*



The Bethlehem Men's Prayer Breakfast will be held Saturday, October 25, in the cafeteria starting at 8:30am. Breakfast will be served followed by a devotion by Bill Ihssen, time for prayer, and a study of God's Word from the Book of Obadiah with its message of judgment for prideful Edom, the descendants of Esau. All are welcome to join us. *"The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rocks and make your home on the heights, you who say to yourself, 'Who can bring me down to the ground?'"* Obadiah 3 NIV.

*Let Everything that  
has breath, Praise the  
Lord.*



# Bethlehem Mission News and Prayers

By Jane Miller

**Dear Bethlehem Family.**

Though my husband Bob and I are no longer able to attend most of the services and activities in person at our beloved Bethlehem, we are almost always able to watch the services live or later in the day.

A bit of personal history for us: Bob arranges for our Sunday volunteer organists here at Lutheran Life Villages, since in retirement he worked part time as Chaplain's Assistant at both this location and later also at the Pine Valley location on Coldwater Rd. Bob had received lay training education through Concordia, Wisconsin, and actually both he and Elvis Netterville received a lot of that training from Pastor David Schlie! Anyway, he then remained on as a volunteer until the Covid Pandemic temporarily shut down all volunteer work at all the retirement communities. In all he served LLV for 25 years. We both as nonresident volunteers had to stop leading Bible studies, the Cross Connections groups I helped lead, etc. for a time. But he was soon back at taking turns as Sunday organist and now plays at least twice per month here himself. And most of that time he was still helping out as part-time organist at Bethlehem and as an active member of the Senior Choir.

Most of you know I was Kindergarten teacher at Bethlehem for my last 13 years of teaching in Lutheran Schools, and as long as I could helped teach our Baptism classes, Kids Church classes and helped lead our Saturday morning ladies' Bible studies until I could no longer make it up and down our many stairs in the building. So we both consider ourselves committed members of our dear congregation just as you do; just can't usually be there in person, as is true for many of our more elderly members you may not see in person.

All that is to say we are very excited to be participating, as a very small group of 2, in the book, **GENTLE AND LOWLY**, by Dane Ortland, that the congregation has chosen to study together this Fall!!! Our daughter had given us that book as a gift before we moved here to LLV almost 2 years ago. We love that all the weekly scriptures are chosen to fit the theme and it is the subject of each weekend's pastoral message by our dear Pastor Ben! The Lord has given Pastor Ben a real vision of the plans He has for our Church on South Anthony Blvd, and we personally are blessed to now live right down the street from our congregation's building and still quite close to LSUS, the mission outreach school we still support with our gifts and prayers!

So, my suggestion for this month is that we each be seeking the Lord on how we can, right where we are be lights shining for Jesus, welcoming those around us to get to know what a wonderful, loving, Prodigal Father, Christ Jesus who is always with us, and the Holy Spirit who lives within each of us Believers, in our lives and locations! For example, Bob and Bill Ihssen help our new Head of Spiritual Care, Pastor James Voorman, lead a class every Tuesday afternoon, and I participate in that class. That group has a real prayer ministry, as does the Cross Connections Bible Study/ support group I lead twice per month. Charlotte Ratliff was recently recognized here as one of our most active volunteers! We have quite a few servers in our dining room who are what we would call "seekers," who are very open to kindness, prayer support and encouragement! No matter how physically active or inactive we can be in our lives, our Lord is eager and willing to use us right where we are! The mess our old world is in is nothing new; tragedies, murders, fear is growing everywhere, and people around us are looking for answers to their fears and sorrows!

Let me leave you with this word of encouragement from Jesus Himself in John 16:33;  
*"I have told you this so that you may have peace in Me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world!"*

**Amen and Amen!**

# 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.**

## AUTUMN AND OUR EMOTIONAL HEALTH

As the seasons shift and autumn colors arrive, October reminds us of the beauty in change — but also the emotional challenges that can come with it. For many, this time of year brings shorter days, busier schedules, and deeper reflections. It's important to remember that caring for our **mental and emotional well-being** is not only healthy — it's also a vital part of our walk with God.

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”*

— Matthew 11:28

The fall season often brings:

- **Increased anxiety or stress** as the holidays and year-end approach
- **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)**, a type of depression linked to lower sunlight and shorter days
- **Feelings of loneliness or isolation**, especially for those living alone or far from loved ones

These emotions are nothing to be ashamed of — they are human, and we are never alone in facing them.

Here are a few ways to care for your mental and spiritual health this October:

1. **Connect with God and Community**
  - Make time for prayer, worship, and reading Scripture.
  - Reach out to a trusted friend, pastor, or prayer partner.
  - Attend a Bible study or small group for fellowship and encouragement.
2. **Practice Seasonal Self-Care**
  - Enjoy nature's beauty with a walk or quiet time outdoors.
  - Keep a journal of prayers and gratitude.
  - Maintain a regular sleep and meal routine.
3. **Be Honest About How You're Feeling**
  - It's okay to say, “I'm struggling.” Faith and mental health go hand in hand.
  - Seek help when needed — caring for your mental health is a form of stewardship.

## Mental Health Resources

- **Focus on the Family – Mental Health Resources**  
<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/get-help/mental-health-resources/>  
Offers articles, counseling referrals, and Christian-based support.
- **Mental Health Grace Alliance**  
<https://mentalhealthgracealliance.org>  
Christian mental health tools for individuals, families, and churches.
- **NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)**  
<https://www.nami.org>  
Non-religious but highly trusted support, education, and help line: 1-800-950-NAMI
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**  
<https://988lifeline.org>  
Dial or text **988** any time, 24/7, for free and confidential support.

This October, let's embrace the changing season with **hope, faith, and care for our whole selves** — body, mind, and spirit. And let's remember: God walks with us through every season.





## 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), or Threasa Lightning (260-417-1450), our Grief Coordinators.



**GriefShare is held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church,  
3705 S. Anthony Blvd., Fort Wayne  
in Room 1 on Tuesdays from  
5:30pm-7:00pm.**

## BETHLEHEM'S 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY "Throughout All Generations"

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

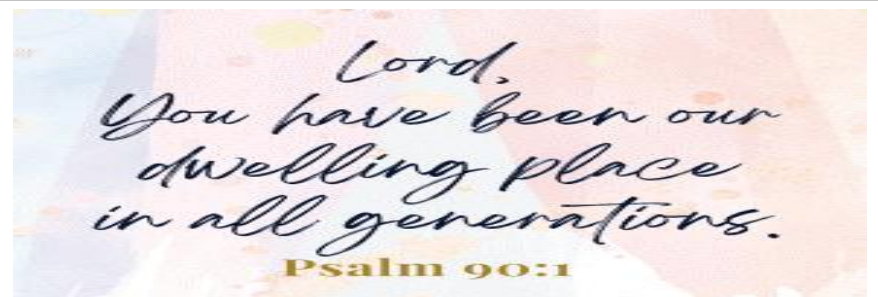
Our theme is **"Throughout All Generations"** Psalm 90:1 *"Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations."*

This is a tentative plan schedule there will be a confirmed schedule of events coming next month.

- January 11, Sunday: Kick-off with sit-down meal
- February 22, Sunday: Organ Recital
- March 27, Friday: FISH FRY
- April 18, Saturday: Great America Clean Up 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
- September 12, Saturday: Alumni Dance
- September 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.

**The next 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee meeting: October 16 at 6:00pm in Room 1  
Volunteers are still needed and appreciated!**

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



National:

lwml.org

State/Local:

lwmlindiana.org



Lutheran  
Women  
in Mission

# WOMEN of BETHLEHEM

## DATES TO REMEMBER

**October 25** at 11:30am

Advent Tea Hostess meeting at in WOB room.

**October 28**

Women of Bethlehem prepare supper for the LSUS teachers and staff.

**November 23 LWML Sunday,**

The women's choir has been postponed. Choir practice TBD.



## LWML FORT WAYNE SOUTH ZONE FALL GATHERING

LWML Fort Wayne South Zone Fall Gathering will be on Saturday, October 11, 2025 from 8:30–11:30am at The Shepherd's Hand Outreach, 1231 South Anthony Blvd, Fort Wayne. The speaker will be Deaconess Jana Peters.

The Theme is **“Held and Led”** - *“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.”*— John 10:27–28

Registration is \$7 (includes a light continental breakfast)

The Ingathering will be for The Shepherd's Hand Outreach. We will be collecting Diapers: sizes 4, 5, 6, Pull-Ups: 2T–3T and 4T–5T, Baby wipes, and Feminine hygiene products (various pad sizes). Monetary donations are also welcome

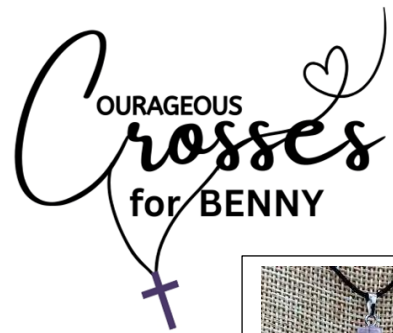
We look forward to a morning of fellowship in God's Word, listening for the Shepherd's voice together, and supporting our neighbors through The Shepherd's Hand.

## **COURAGEOUS CROSSES FOR BENNY A NATIONWIDE MISSION**

On September 20th at their “Fall Fling” Gathering, eight Bethlehem women assembled 100 *Crosses for Benny*. The project went smoothly after they mastered tying a sliding knot! The Women of Bethlehem purchased 100 quartz crosses, and silk cord for the crosses. Each cross cost less than 50 cents. What happens to these crosses? They will travel to Slidell, LA to the **Forged by Fire Ministry**, where they will be given out with a hot meal to disaster victims.

Forged by Fire Ministries is a disaster relief and community meal non-profit organization, an RSO (Recognized Service Organization) of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. Their Mission of mercy is simple, feeding and serving people in their time of need. **SHARING OUR SAVIOR, ONE MEAL AT A TIME.**

Their Vision envision a “Comfort Village” being set-up at disaster sites. This would be a place for someone to grab a bite to eat, wash some clothing, take a shower, relax for a bit and receive some spiritual care before heading back into the muck and mire of recovery work from a disaster. This concept fulfills our mission of feeding and serving the entire person, both body and soul.





# The Joyful Corner

## Welcome Fall: Finding Rhythm and Joy in the Season of Change

by Sabrina Walters

School is starting, the leaves are turning, and pumpkin spice is about to make its annual debut. **For many of us, fall carries a sense of rhythm and routine that summer often lacks** — a chance to return to familiar patterns, nourish our bodies, and reconnect with ourselves and our families.

As the season shifts, I notice myself craving structure: healthier meals, regular exercise, and mornings that aren't a chaotic rush. There's a cultural rhythm baked into fall — family dinners, packed lunches, and cozy routines that signal "we're back." But let's be honest, trying to do it all — morning meditation, walks, breakfast prep, work tasks — can feel overwhelming.

**Instead of overloading ourselves with a checklist, this season, I invite you to focus on one or two things you love about fall.** Whether it's savoring a warm cup of apple cider, decorating your home with autumn leaves, or enjoying a quiet walk in the crisp air, choose what brings you joy and makes the season feel meaningful.

This mindful approach doesn't just nurture our own sense of self — it creates space for connection with our children. **Research consistently shows that family dinners support positive outcomes for kids,** including lower risk of risky behaviors and stronger emotional bonds. And the magic ingredient isn't just the food — it's the intentional presence we bring.

A simple step toward mindful family connection? Turn off the tech. Make a habit of engaging in PNP (play, no phone) time with your kids. Make the dinner table a no-phone zone, and pretend like it's 1995 for a while. **Phones down, screens off, and conversation on.** Ask open-ended questions, share stories, and engage in real conversation. You can even use a set of "table questions" or Love Maps prompts to spark dialogue. Not only does this help children feel seen and valued, it reminds us that being fully present is possible — even amidst the chaos of work, school, and life.

This fall, let's embrace the goodness of structure and the joy of connection. By focusing on what truly matters — our routines, our loved ones, our own sense of balance — **we can step into the season intentionally, savoring the warmth, coziness, and familiarity that makes fall so special.**

## TIPS FOR FINDING MORE JOY:

- Think about what you can do instead of being stuck on what you can't.
- Dream of the things you would like to do for yourself that would invite joy.  
Maybe you want to start cooking healthy and delicious meals. Or start an exercise regimen.
- Pick one thing to focus on, and then plan to slowly integrate a change into your life.
- Look for something during the day to smile about for a few seconds.
- Smiling evokes a physiological change in your body that allows you to become receptive to positive feelings.
- Don't limit yourself to only feeling joy about your own life.  
Open a space in your heart to feel joy for others.
- Just being present is a powerfully joyful experience.

**When you look for joy — you will find it.**

# LSUS NEWS

## Heavy Lifting, Cool Results

Our students had a front-row seat to an exciting moment on campus as the final HVAC unit was lifted into place on the building. With construction in its final stages, several classes were able to step outside and safely watch the crane at work. This last installation marks an important step toward completing the HVAC project and ensuring updated air conditioning/heat throughout the school. We are grateful for these improvements and look forward to the comfort they will bring to our students and staff for years to come.



## GATHERING OUTDOORS IN PRAISE

At Lutheran South Unity School, we've been blessed with the chance to enjoy God's beautiful creation by gathering outside for morning devotions and chapel while the gym finishes up construction. Worshiping together in front of the school entrance and across the lawn has filled our days with fresh air, sunshine, and joyful praise. These outdoor moments have reminded us that no matter where we gather, God's presence is with us, drawing us together as one school family.



# CLHS NEWS

## Concordia Lutheran High School Theatre Department Presents...

### A BOLD STEP

**You're invited!** Leadership from Concordia Lutheran High School in Fort Wayne will be at various local churches, Concordia Lutheran High School and virtually to share exciting news about the high school's capital campaign, A Bold Step. **Learn how you can be part of this God-sized journey** by RSVPing to an impact event in our area.

Visit [cadetsboldstep.org](http://cadetsboldstep.org) or scan the QR code.

#### Upcoming Events:

10/5 Peace Lutheran, Fremont

10/7 Concordia Lutheran High School, Auditorium

10/9 Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne

10/12 Peace Lutheran, Fort Wayne

10/14 Virtual

10/20 Suburban Bethlehem

10/21 St. Peter's Lutheran Church



Matt's Rack provides uniform clothes (shirts, pants, belts, underwear, socks, & sweatshirts) to any family in our Fort Wayne Lutheran school community free of charge through a grant from the Lutheran Foundation.

This year 215 students from 8 of our Lutheran schools (almost half were LSUS families) benefitted from the program.

It is now being housed in the lower level of Bethlehem in rooms 15 & 16. For many years it was at CLHS.

Pictures will be coming as the rooms are getting organized. New coordinator, Susan Mittelstaedt, is thankful to Bethlehem for their generosity for the use of the building. CLHS students worked hard to move everything over from one building to the other.

### Dial "M" For Murder - Fall Drama Saturday, October 4 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, October 5 at 2:00 p.m.

Our theater season opens with this psychological thriller. The show unravels an elegant mystery about an ex-tennis star who plots to kill his wealthy wife. Tony Wendice suspects his lovely wife Margot of being disloyal to him. In an attempt to gain the upperhand, Tony spins a tangled web of deception, lies, and revenge that can only end in one thing: murder. This thriller is directed by Mr. Chris Murphy.

### Cut and Knock, Knock - One Act Plays Saturday, October 11 at 7:30 p.m.

#### Cut

In this absurdist comedy, a group of actors rehearses a play within a play, within a play... and so on. As the plot becomes increasingly convoluted, they begin to forget who's playing whom, who the real director is, and even who they truly are. Identities and scripts blur as Cut spirals into delightful chaos, leaving the audience to ponder where performance ends and reality begins. This show is directed by Mrs. Noelle Turney-Mickelini.

#### Knock, Knock

"Knock, knock... Who's there?" The answer to this question is complex and chaotic for two package delivery workers, taking the audience with them for a day on the job. Each door is a new opportunity for comedic disaster as they encounter quirky clients at every stop. This rapid-fire vignette-style comedy reminds viewers to expect the unexpected, and to put one foot in front of the other regardless of circumstances! This show is directed by Miss Hannah Mundt.





**Draft, not yet approved by the Board**  
**Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Board of Directors Regular Monthly Meeting**  
**September 9, 2025**

Members present: Pastor Ben Ahlersmeyer, Evans Branigan, Brian Bates, Dan Bates, Rachele Dance, Blake Sebring, Greg Shediack, David Schult and John Stafford    Members absent: none    Guests: Dena Schult

The September regular monthly meeting of the Board was opened at 6:36 PM by President Greg Shediack. Pastor Ben provided an opening devotion based on Ezekeil 34:11 where God promises to seek out His sheep and John 10:11 where Jesus tells us he is the Good Shepard. God's promise is fulfilled with Jesus' purpose. Pastor closed the devotion with prayer.

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

There were new items for the Soul Accounting.

Treasurer Brian Bates presented the August Financial Report. Monthly income for August was \$38,862 compared with a budgeted amount of \$26,833. This included a \$7,500 contribute from the Summer Clubhouse for the use of our facility. Income from offerings through the first eight months of the year totaled \$234,188 and total income including miscellaneous receipts and extraordinary income totaled \$263,396. Monthly expenses for August totaled \$32,900, compared with monthly budget amount of \$33,668. Expenses for the year through August totaled \$272,209. The balance in the Endowment Fund at the end of August was \$1,430,462. That portion of the Endowment Fund resting with the Lutheran Foundation was current through July as we had not yet received the August statement. The month-end balance in the SSMG Fund was \$26,460. Brian also presented a report illustrating actual expenses compared with budgeted amounts for the major categories of the Operating Budget. Through August, we have expended 67 percent of the budgeted expenses. The monthly Treasurer's Report as submitted was unanimously adopted on a motion by Brian Bates and a second by Dan Bates.

Pastor's report included an update on some modifications to the music during the Saturday and Sunday services in working with Kasey Needham Hapner and Janelle Deal. The discussed arrangements for the upcoming book study (Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers) starting with the September 21 service and Bible Study. This year's Thanksgiving Service will be held on Tuesday, November 25<sup>th</sup>. The book of Isaiah will be the topic for the Advent series. Pastor also announced that we will soon be assigned a fieldworker. Matt's Rack will be moving into the building on September 19<sup>th</sup> and will be located at Bethlehem for at least the next year. They are relocating from the Concordia Lutheran High School due to the renovations soon to begin at that facility. Bethlehem will be the formal grant applicant for the support Matt's Rack has annually received from the Lutheran Foundation.

The Board next continued its discussion of the Lutheran South Unity School governance model. John Stafford indicated his willingness to assist with a group from the school examining this issue. Pastor will submit his name for their consideration.

Blake Sebring updated the Board members on the ongoing activity of the Community Center Committee. As of the Board meeting, we had not received word from Sacred Places regarding our grant application to them for several building repair items. (Subsequent to the Board meeting, we did receive notice that our application had been approved.)

Brian Bates distributed to the board the annual financial review as prepared by Mark Blessing of the Financial Review Committee. He encouraged each Board member to review the report.

We currently have one vacancy among our three delegates to the Concordia Lutheran High School Association. Evans Branigan moved and Brian Bates seconded that John Stafford be appointed to fill that vacancy. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board reviewed 2026 budget request from the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee and the information will be utilized as the next year's budget is prepared.

Lastly, Greg Shediack reviewed with the Board a recent discussion held by the Board of Elders regarding building security during the Saturday and Sunday services. It was noted that once the services begin, we will be locking all exterior doors other than the one under the portico on the south side of the church.

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 7:47 PM.

Submitted in His service,  
John Stafford, Secretary

Sacred Places of Indiana has notified Bethlehem it has been awarded a grant of \$66,350 for the Community Center project. Committee members have been working for more than a year to earn this grant, attending four day-long trainings in Indianapolis and building a database of research and history for applications. Bethlehem had to compete against a cohort of 50 applicants.

Sacred Places previously awarded Bethlehem a \$23,500 grant for a total-building assessment to point out trouble spots. This second grant will be used to address those areas, including membrane roof replacement, chimney masonry repairs, outdated ventilation fans, sewer backflow prevention measures and repair to the bell tower.

As part of this award, Bethlehem has two years to complete the repairs and is responsible for matching one-third of the funds provided to give us a total of \$100,000. Per the grant award provisions, we are prohibited from using Bethlehem's endowment fund as any or all of the match.

This award also encourages committee members to apply for larger grants in the future from Sacred Places. We were limited to \$75,000 or less during this application, which had to be filed by June 15 shortly after the training and assessment were completed.

## October is Pastor Appreciation Month

Pastor Appreciation Month is a designated time, every October, for churches to thank and encourage pastors and other clergy for their spiritual and emotional guidance and service.

The month culminates in Pastor Appreciation Day which falls on the second Sunday of October. It provides an opportunity for both individual and group efforts to show gratitude to spiritual leaders through gifts, words of affirmation, and practical support. Here are a few ways to show your appreciation:

**Pray** - Commit to praying for your pastor and his family.

**Give** - If you have the means to do so, offer them a small token. This could be as simple as a gift certificate to a nice restaurant, market, or bookstore they like. Or, if finances are tight, you could offer to babysit or perform another service for them and their family have your kids make them a card.

**Give Them Permission to Be Human**

We often expect our pastors to be superhuman. Their sermons will not always be Instagrammable. Their home life will not always be marked by peace and harmony. The truth is that we all have tough days at work. Let's extend grace to them.

We thank the Lord for you,

PASTOR=

for your ministry, your love for us,

and for the good work He is doing

in and through our church.

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

1 – Tamara Griggs	17 – Rayshae Pierce
2 – Melissa Ahlersmeyer	18 – Connie Hawkins
3 – Linda Kalthoff	Threasa Lightning
5 – Dawn Beaty	Cassius Nelson
7 – Kim Ellison	19 – Glenn Emley
Kiera Nelson	Greg Shediack
9 – Keasia Gatewood	22 – Chandra Jones
Grant Pettit	Andres Linan
Miriam Roesener	24 – Christina Carillo
10 – Tu Uyen Dang	Louise Nahrwold
11 – Quinton Jones	Peter Schlie
13 – Shea Hutchinson	25 – Athena Carrillo
14 – Malik Kashani-Hill	27 – Keith Peterson
15 – Marlene Berning	28 – Tatum Owen
Amber Hill-Roddy	29 – Aleese Branigan
Edward Ramos	31 – Jeveil Lee
16 – LT DeYampert	Christopher Rigdon
Archie Smith	



**IS YOUR  
INFO UP  
TO DATE?**

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.

## OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 4 – Kent and Michelle Bearman (28yrs)
- 5 – Steven and Gladys Davies (41yrs)
- 6 – Steve and Mandy Martinsky (7yrs)
- 9 – David and Donna Volmerding (54yrs)
- 13 – Glenn and Suzie Emley (41yrs)
- 19 – Greg and Sharon Shediack (29yrs)
- 28 – John and Ruth Bates (36)

## SAVE THE DATE!

Voters' Assembly  
December 14, 2025



**Bethlehem**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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It's simple and secure.**

**Visit**

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

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provided.**



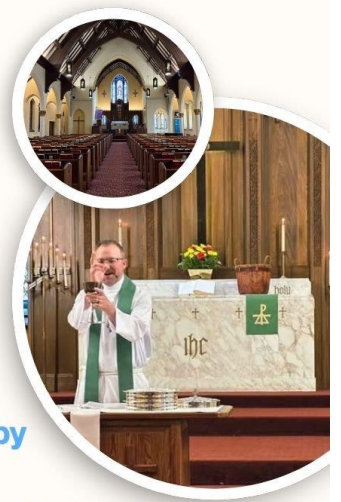
**Bethlehem**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Facebook  
Livestream**

Stream worship  
weekly  
9AM EVERY SUNDAY

**Access the livestream by  
visiting**

**[www.facebook.com/bethlehemfortwayne](https://www.facebook.com/bethlehemfortwayne)**





# OCTOBER 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>
<b>4</b>	<b>Kim Ellison Sharon Shediack</b>	<b>Ed Ramos</b>			<b>Blake Sebring</b>	
<b>5</b>		<b>Greg Shediack</b>	<b>Evans Branigan</b>	<b>Donna Volmerding</b>	<b>Allison Cheng</b>	<b>Josiah Hapner</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Linda Stafford</b>	<b>Peter Schlie</b>			<b>Charlotte Ratliff</b>	
<b>12</b>		<b>Peter Schlie</b>	<b>Dan Bates</b>	<b>The Hapner Family</b>	<b>Aaron Brown</b>	<b>Joshua Hapner</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Mary Snow Allison Cheng</b>	<b>Michael Johnson</b>			<b>Carla Johnson</b>	
<b>19</b>		<b>John Bates</b>	<b>Ron Gallmeyer</b>	<b>John Stafford Linda Stafford</b>	<b>Josiah Hapner</b>	<b>Dave Volmerding</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>Sharon Dietrich Suzie Emley Amber Herndon</b>	<b>Brian Bates</b>			<b>Blake Sebring</b>	
<b>26</b>		<b>Greg Shediack</b>	<b>Evans Branigan</b>	<b>Kimberly Brooks</b>	<b>Allison Cheng</b>	<b>Randy Hapner</b>

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

# October<sub>2025</sub>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. Jeremiah 3:15</i>			<b>1</b> 6:00pm - Choir 7:15pm - Handbells	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 8:30am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Sharon/Al Wedding <b>4:00pm Worship w/Comm</b>
<b>5</b> <b>9:00am Worship w/Comm</b> 100 <sup>th</sup> Food Committee Mtg. 10:30am Education Hour Adults –Café Children - Sonshine Club	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 5:30pm GriefShare 6:30pm - Bd. of Elders	<b>8</b> 6:00pm - Choir 7:15pm - Handbells	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 8:30am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Women's Bible Study 8:30am South Zone Fall Gathering <b>4:00pm Worship w/Comm</b>
<b>12</b> <b>9:00am Worship w/Comm</b> 10:30am Education Hour Adults –Café Children - Sonshine Club Pastor Appreciation Day	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 6:30pm – Bd. of Directors 5:30pm GriefShare	<b>15</b> 6:00pm - Choir 7:15pm - Handbells	<b>16</b> 6:00pm 100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 8:30am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Women's Bible Study <b>4:00pm Worship w/Comm</b>
<b>19</b> <b>9:00am Worship w/Comm</b> 10:30am Education Hour Adults –Café Children - Sonshine Club	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 5:30pm GriefShare	<b>22</b> 6:00pm - Choir 7:15pm - Handbells	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 8:30am Prayer Breakfast 9:00am Women's Bible Study 11:30am Advent Tea Hostess Mtg. <b>4:00pm Worship w/Comm</b>
<b>26</b> <b>9:00am Worship w/Comm</b> 10:30am Education Hour Adults –Café Children - Sonshine Club	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 5:30pm GriefShare 6:30pm – Bd. Of Property	<b>29</b> 6:00pm - Choir 7:15pm - Handbells	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	