JANUARY 2019



Bethlehem

Traverse City, MI 49686 (231) 947-9880



Worship Times:

Website: <u>www.bethlehemtc.org</u> Email: <u>bethlehem@bethlehemtc.org</u>

<u>Building Hours</u>: Monday – Thursday, 9am to 3pm

<u>Office Hours</u> Monday – Thursday, 9am to 3pm Saturday: Sunday: 5 pm Celebrate! Worship 8:30 am Traditional Worship (This time change starts Jan 13th) 9:45 am Education Hour 11 am Modern Worship

Communion at all services

Follow the STAR to Bethlehem!

Our Mission...

"We journey with God, to serve with love"

Our Vision...

"As a community of believers journeying with God together, we at Bethlehem are called to serve with love by growing a premier youth ministry; enlivening Christian discipleship through lifelong learning, care, and spiritual formation; fostering a vibrant and inspiring worship experience; utilizing our natural setting and location for faithful creation care and outdoor ministry; and opening our doors always to be a "campus at the crossroads" for the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ."



"When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was." – Matthew 2:9 (NRSV)



Friends at Bethlehem,

As we wrap up the Christmas season (no pun intended) and head into Epiphany, I must confess the above verse has always intrigued me: "ahead of them went the star...until it stopped over the place where the child was." Scholars have mused that the Bethlehem Star may have been a comet (thus its movement) or other more outlandish and amazing things. I myself am comfortable in the mystery, knowing this one helpful takeaway: the Magi were led by the Light – a new light in the world that guided them to Jesus.

We still follow that "star."

No, I don't mean the Star of Bethlehem (ahem, this newsletter!) – though at some level we could say that, I suppose. I mean we follow the Light of Christ that brings understanding in a world that often seems bereft of light. When the gospel writer says "A light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it" we can safely assume that the powers of this world (often the absence of light) cannot overcome Christ's light. Physically, for darkness to overcome light it would mean not that darkness could by its own power overcome light (that is impossible) but that the light was somehow blocked: by a planet, a door or other object large or small that casts a shadow. But the psalmist assures us that even while walking in "the darkest shadows," God's light is not just around the corner, but always with us (Psalm 23:4).

In short, Christ's light cannot be blocked in the ultimate sense. That Light, that Love, is there for us to follow, and when we do it leads us to places of new hope.

The other reason I love this text is because the Magi came to pay the baby Jesus homage, and they did it with a sense of adventure and daring. Kind Herod wanted to co-opt the Magi as de facto spies, asking them to "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." They did not take the bait and – fearing for Jesus' safety and perhaps their own – "having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road."

There is so much to unpack on this journey, and there are so many reasons to follow the light. This January, and this year, I invite you to ask these questions as we journey together:

- Where is the "star" leading us?
- What are the shadows we face?
- How do we pay homage to Christ, leaving the manger "by another way"?

May your Epiphany season be full of newness and love.

President's Report January 2019



For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. Isaiah 9 vs. 6

Welcome to a new year at Bethlehem! I hope you took advantage of all the wonderful Christmas programing here at Bethlehem this past month. We are blessed with exciting messages, wonderful singers, and very talented musicians. They all combined to keep us centered on the true meaning of Christmas – God's amazing gift of a son, sent to reconcile us with our God.

First, I want to thank the congregation for passing the 2019 budget. Your Church Council, the officers, and Committee Chairs worked hard to fine tune this document. The goal was to provide the kind of programing that you want and at the same time try to keep the expenses and revenue in sync. While we are out of balance, the Council will be working hard to increase revenue and grow the membership. A special committee is being formed to address growing our membership and making the member experience more meaningful. We will be proactive in the coming months to bring in new members and retain our current members.

Second, we are super excited about the Intern Program we are entering into this year. Our application has been submitted to the Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. Your Church Council will be gathering an Internship Committee to act as the liaison between the Intern and the congregation. If you have an interest in becoming a part of this committee and help shape the intern experience, please contact me or any member of Council.

Third, there are so many groups and activities, "Faith Formation for All Ages" here at Bethlehem. My hope and prayer is that you take advantage of these wonderful activities that will enhance your faith and strengthen your roots in Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

I hope to see you at church and remember: We are all ambassadors of the church so take time greet others and especially visitors and those you do not recognize.

God bless you, always, Jim Parkinson Church Council President

FROM THE DESK OF ALEXIS— DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND OUTREACH

Out with the old, in with the new... **Happy 2019, Bethlehem!!** I anticipate this year to be filled with excitement and growth for our youth, starting with this month's programs!

Confirmation starts up again on **January 20**th! We are starting a new semester and a new curriculum! We'll be focusing on the sacraments and mixing in some Rob Bell... Lots of fun to come!



Our **BLUES** kids will be meeting up on **Sunday, January 27th** for a **sledding party at Twin Lakes** (**1pm)!** (If we don't have snow, we'll change plans and I will keep you updated...)

High School Nights experienced great success in 2018, and we're so excited to start 2019! Our first get-together is a bible study on **January 13th at Bethlehem!** <u>PLEASE NOTE</u>: We are changing to a **5pm** meeting time for this year! Schedules are posted around the church...

And speaking of high school students, preparations for our **2019 YouthWorks** trip are underway! We're going to **Marvell, AR from July 7th—12th...** If you haven't contacted me, but have a student who is interested, please do so as soon as possible! More details to come soon...

The Great Lakes Gathering was a success! Our partnership with Zion went well, we heard excellent speakers, developed new friendships, and learned a heck of a lot! A big THANK YOU to all who helped make the trip happen.

Our next Living Waters event is **Charge**, which is coming up in **March (22nd-24th)!** We have 1 student attending, and this time we'll be partnering with **Advent Lutheran Church!** I will let you know as we get closer if we have any donation needs.

Please also note that our **Annual Family Ski Trip** is approaching, with our **Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser THIS MONTH on January 13th!** Come out to eat some tasty pancakes **between Sunday services** and support the kids going on the trip! (Actual trip date is **February 10th** from 1pm-7:30pm.)

New Tradition: Youth in Action! You may have noticed a different kind of email in your inbox last month with the title "Youth in Action"... and I hope you read it! I will be sending out these emails on a **regular monthly basis** so you folks know how you can be in touch with our youth! We received lots of positive feedback, so the hope is that next month we can get some cheerleaders on the benches for our kiddos! © Remember... "it takes a village"!

As always, if you have any questions regarding programming or anything mentioned in my article, please feel free to contact me!

I hope this New Year treats you well, and God's blessings go with you! Peace.

Alexís Steig

Director of Youth and Outreach Bethlehem Lutheran Church, TC

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS





Christian Ed: Faith, Truth, Love ... and fun ☺

For such is the Kingdom of Heaven

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matt 19:14 NKJV

It is a joy & honor to be entrusted with the role of coordinating Christian Education at Bethlehem Lutheran. Thank you to everyone for welcoming me into your lovely church family.

During a recent advent dinner, I had the fun of chatting with one of our BLC kids. She told me she couldn't wait for school vacation to begin. When I asked what she was planning to do during vacation, she enthusiastically said, "I'm going to go bonkers." *Bonkers* Wow! What a terrific response. She was so enthusistic about the idea that I almost wanted to go bonkers too. Having kids as part of our BLC family is great, isn't it? They get easily excited about any & everthing, and it's downright contagious!

- Yes ...We are rich, indeed to have young ones as part of our BLC family.
- As ... We keep them close in our hearts, They keep us young at heart.
- And ...God is trusting each of us to enfold these dear ones in care and love

So.....Let's join together in supporting our BLC kids by keeping them close at heart & close in prayer.

The KIDS AT HEART section (*below*) will be a regular feature of the C.E. News page in the montly Star magazine. It will share a kid-focused prayer which you can clip out & place in a location where you will see it

often. Each time you glance at the prayer, please pause for a moment & lift up our BLC kids before the throne of their gracious Heavenly Father. *Peace*.



Carmen Yoder, C.E. Coordinator

Lenten Season 2019

With Advent celebrations still fresh in our hearts, I hope we are all starting the new year feeling energized with a renewed sense of Christ's birth in our lives.

As we look forward to the new year, Lent will soon be upon us. This is such a beautiful season to continue the theme of Christ's birth in the lives of our BLC kids as we help them develop their love and personal relationship with Jesus. Lent 2019 will begin on March 6, & run through April 18. Special programming & activities will be provided for the kids during the Wednesday evening services. Please plan to come.

First Communion

One very special component of the Lenten season is preparing our BLC kids for

ent is for

FIRST

participating in the Communion Sacrament.

Suzanne Lehto will be leading a series of *First Communion* classes during the Wednesday evening Lenten services. If this year is your child's 1st Communion, or if your child is already participating in Communion but has not yet had the opportunity to join in these classes, please consider being a part of this memorable experience.

The class is appropriate for children ages 1st grade or older. Parents are encouraged to join the class together with their child.

Kids at Heart ... Prayerfully keeping our BLC kids close at heart

Dear Heavenly Father

We lift up the precious young lives of the the BLC family. We ask You to fill them with awareness that You are a kind and loving God, and let them always knows how much they are loved by You and by all of the family of Behtlehem Lutheran Church. In Jesus Name, we praise and thank You. Amen.

November 28, 2018

Greetings, brothers and sisters in Christ!

We give thanks always for the prayerful consideration and generous giving by those who have responded to our Fall 2018-2019 Stewardship drive. **To those who have not yet pledged, we would like to emphasize the importance of pledging prior to year-end, as pledging gives us a valuable snapshot of how our 2019 budget can be actualized in good faith.** For example, though we typically receive 90 to 100 pledges by December, thus far have received only around 70. The good news is that pledging, on average, has shown an increase in giving of 4.9% over last year...But the total number of pledge responses, and pledged contributions, is still lagging, and we know that for many it has just been a case of busy schedules or new factors like the new IRS "Minimum Required Distribution" guidelines that may be creating new questions or hesitations. For more information on new IRS rules for people over age 71, please see the re-printed article from our May STAR newsletter, written by Jim Hutchison.

Yet it's not all about pledging, nor is it all about money. Actually, **the biggest challenge we face at Bethlehem is that we are a church in transition, and a church whose greatest attribute – its sense of welcoming the community – is in need of help, YOUR help!** Each weekend, we see new visitors enter our midst, and we are constantly in need of both (1) one-on-one followup and relationship-building with our visitors and (2) finding new ways to create sustainable events and ministry to the community with our people, grounds and resources.

For an example of the *first type of welcome*, we pose this question: **How might you, as a friendly ambassador of Bethlehem, invite a visitor to something** as informal as coffee (outside of church) or as structured as a small group or future event or ministry at BLC? For an example of the *second type of welcome*, we ask this question: **Might you consider becoming an integral member of some of our "tried-and-true" outreach ministries** like Safe Harbor, the Fall Craft Show, next year's Health Fair ("Little Arms Open") or perhaps something totally new that you are passionate about and could demonstrate our outreach and care for the world "Beyond F(our) Walls"? Other examples might include volunteering with the baby pantry that Bethlehem hosts twice/month, starting a bible study or some new idea you may be itching to start!

This leads us to **our next big and exciting avenue of ministry at Bethlehem: becoming a "teaching site"** or (for those who know the last 30 years of history at BLC) once again taking on an internship program. The beauty of becoming an intern site is three-fold:

- **1. We build new leaders** for the local and larger church, and as we are inspired by this growing leader we build up new lay leaders in our midst;
- **2. We all become teachers** (of the intern) **and students** (of wherever the Spirit guides us through his or her ministry); and *(see next side)*

(continued)

3. We allow ourselves to try something new, to open up our hearts, and deepen our sense of community with new learning, discipleship and shepherding.

Yes, all of this will require a commitment of time, resources, and good will. In the new year, we hope to encourage one another to make such moves sustainable (be on the lookout for a specialized challenge in January or early February!) So we have good courage – for with God all things are possible – and through your open minds, adventurous hearts and renewed sense of vision, we will get there...together.

In peace,

Pr. Paul, Barbara Wright (Stewardship), Jim Parkinson (Council President), Chuck Ardingo (Council VP, Fellowship & Property liaison), LoAnn VandeLeest (Membership/ Evangelism), Phil Anderson (Bethlehem Visions Chair)

Qualified Charitable IRA Distributions

A way to make charitable donations tax-free and still use the standard deduction when filing taxes.

Written by Jim Hutchison

This year Margaret and I have elected to make our donations to the church and other charities using a provision the IRS calls a Qualified Charitable IRA Distribution. These withdrawals from my IRA are not subject to income tax. If you qualify, you may wish to investigate this form of giving.

To qualify

- You must be age 70 $\frac{1}{2}$ or older.
- The donation must be transferred directly from a traditional IRA to the charity.

To set up our donation I use the web site of my IRA manager - in my case TIAA/CREF. I fill out a form listing the amount of my withdrawal with the name and address of the charitable origination to which they will directly send a check. I need to complete the form every time we make a donation. We plan to make quarterly donations to the church and annual donations to other charities.

This donation is not counted as part of the taxable income we receive from the IRA, hence we lower our tax bill, and we will be able to take advantage of the new higher standard deduction when we file our taxes. Even though the donation does not count as taxable income, it does count toward satisfying the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD).

Please note I am only describing my understanding of this type of IRA withdrawal. I am not qualified to offer tax advice. You should consult a tax advisor or IRA manager. A web search for *Qualified Charitable IRA Distributions* will generate useful information.

Safe Harbor: Our Ministry to Persons Experiencing Homeless, February 9-13

In February our week of Safe Harbor service will be shared with Northern Lakes Community Church. As a result we will cover only four days beginning Saturday evening February 9 and ending Wednesday morning February 13.

Several changes in volunteer service are in effect for the second year of operation of the shelter building. The most significant change is that a paid staff supervisor will be on duty for the overnight hours, reducing the number of overnight volunteers needed to one man and one woman.

Safe Harbor is a faith-based ministry offering love and service to those experiencing homelessness in the Grand Traverse region, through emergency shelter, meals, and encouragement to move forward toward permanent housing. Our congregation has joyfully participated in this ministry since 2009. If you have volunteered in the past, thank you for your service, and we hope that you will continue. If you haven't volunteered we hope this year you will join us in this ministry. It's a great experience, and we have many past volunteers who are willing to be a mentor. We will begin volunteer sign-up on January 12. For further information please contact Jim and Margaret Hutchison, (hutchison@alma.edu, 231-714-6062) or Chuck and Chris Ardingo (dingo457@msn.com, 206-919-7487).

Ways You Can Volunteer

Overnight: Be present during the night to assist the staff supervisor with security and assistance for guests. May sleep in shifts during the night. 10 pm-6 am.

Evening: Assist with guest check-in. Eat with guests. Interact with guests during the evening. Assist with dining area cleanup. 5:30-10 pm

Morning Cleaning: Clean dining and sleeping areas and bathrooms after the departure of guests. 7:30-9:30 am

Breakfast: Lay out and supervise the continental breakfast. Clean kitchen. 6-8:30 am

Dinner: Food preparation and service. 4-8 pm. Small groups, women's and men's groups, or families are encouraged to volunteer. BLC will pay for food.

Grocery Donation: Food items for snacks and breakfast are needed.

Bethlehem Visions Committee January 2019

The Bethlehem Visions Committee met several times writing, editing, and finalizing our 2019 Intern Request Application. Because of your support for the 2019 budget, we have now submitted our completed application to the Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. We should hear back regarding our application sometime in March.

Our committee is super excited about the Intern Program that we are entering into this year. We believe this will both help Pastor Paul and challenge our congregation to expand its vision and outreach. Your Church Council will be gathering an Internship Committee to act as the liaison between the Intern and the congregation. If you have an interest in becoming a part of this committee and help shape the intern experience, please contact any member of Council.

At our next meeting, in January, we will turn our attention to another area of future development for Bethlehem. I believe the Visions Committee is exciting as it provides us a chance to be creative and think out of the box with regards to future directions. Without the usual silos that inhibit cross pollination, we look out at the possibilities and ask the question: Why not?

Thank you for your prayers and support,

Phil Anderson, Bethlehem Visions Committee Chairman

SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING

On December 8 & 14 at Tom's East Bay Market, 22 Bethlehem members rang bells to collect donations for the Salvation Army. The people ringing the bells were: Pauline Morell, LoAnn& Mike VandeLeest, David Akers, Phil Anderson, Connie Christopherson, Butch & Jan Waisanen, Gail Goldsmith, Linda Hansen, Chuck & Kris Ardingo, Jim Hutchinson, Sharon Weller, Pastor Paul Busekist, Carl & Suzanne Lehto, Helen Rafeld, Nancy Downer, Mike & Krista McCarty, and Jalen & Tracy Provo. In the 2 days of ringing, we collected \$1010.30. The Salvation Army extends to them a huge THANK YOU!!!!!!

NEWS FROM YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL:

In the 2019 budget, we created a couple small line items for new revenue/contributions to address our tight budget moving forward. One of those ideas is hosting an "Ad Page" on the back page of the STAR newsletter. We have volunteers who will help make this happen and would like to get the word out that if you or someone you know would like publicity for an organization or business, we will offer 1/16th of a page for \$25/month or 1/8 page for \$50/month. A parishioner with graphic design experience has graciously offered members a free, one time layout for their ad (i.e. the equivalent of about 20 minutes of work to get set up, and another member has offered to lay out the page. Our bookkeeper, Phil Anderson will track and document the contributions/donations to help us move forward. Please contact Renae Wells, Sharon Weller, or Phil Anderson in the office if you are interested.

---Your Stewardship Committee

REMINDER: Starting January 13, our Traditional Worship Service will start at 8:30am.

TOGETHER: Threads of Giving, Bread of Life PLEDGES STILL WELCOME!!!

November 3 & 4 was our 2019 Pledge Weekend. "The Pledge Card Vase" will be in the back of the church or you can put your envelope in Phil Andersen's mailbox just outside the Office. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE consider automated giving!!! (It makes me feel so gratified to have my "duty done" each week--Renae).

XYZ

Our next XYZ Get Together will be THURSDAY, January 17th with a pot luck at noon. Our program following lunch will be presented by Beth Dole of FYZICAL Therapy and Body Balance. She will share some tips on how to live a safter life as we age. All are welcome....bring a friend (or two). Direct your questions to Jan or Butch at 231-271-3802 or etwaisanen@centurytel.net.

<u>SEEKING MEMBERS:</u> Please consider sharing a bit of your time, input, talent, and LOVE for BLC. The following groups could use your help: The Stewardship Committee (Chair Barbara Wright 231-735-3227), The Altar Guild (Barbara Oster 231-668-7038), and Y2A (needs parents of youth and children for future programming) (Alexis Steig—Church office).

COMMUNION PARTIES AT BAY RIDGE: Once a month, (currently on the second Wednesday at 2pm) Pastor Paul, John and Jan Stretlien, and occasionally other folks, go to Bay Ridge to offer a Communion Party to the residents. This happens at 2:00 pm and there are songs, communion, a short sermon and fellowship with coffee and cookies after. The congregation is welcome to attend! ⁽³⁾

HELP NEEDED: We have a young couple in the congregation needing an economical place to live. (EX. A mother-in-law quarters or extra room). Please contact Pastor Paul for additional information.

<u>Reminder-</u>--All are welcome at our Council Meetings: Tuesday, January 15 at 6 pm. There is a time slot for guests to speak at the beginning of the meeting,.

November 2018 Financial Update

November Income = \$31,363 November Expense = \$34,698 Negative Cash Flow = \$3,335

YTD Income = \$338,143 YTD Expense = \$345,651 Negative Cash Flow = \$7,508

The month of November was budgeted to have a negative cash flow of \$4,308 so we were actually \$973 off our budget target...in a good way. Remember that some months are budgeted to be positive and some negative. It all depends on how many Sunday's and pay periods hit in any particular month...plus the usual variables of income and expense. December should be a positive cash flow month so we will know shortly how we end up the year.

End of year figures for December will be out soon.

The congregation approved the 2019 budget at our December 9 Congregational meeting.

Submitted by Dave Peppler, Treasurer

First, I want to wish you all a Healthy and Happy New Year as we move into 2019!

Our December Church Council Meeting was an extremely productive meeting as we close out 2018 and look forward to 2019. Bethlehem's need for increased membership and revenue were addressed by all of Council. There will be a meeting in early January of all the committee chairpersons, led by Chuck Ardingo of Fellowship, to brainstorm ways to increase membership. Various Council members have volunteered to take on new avenues of revenue building, such as advertising revenue from ads in the STAR, increased rental income from various for-profit organizations that use our Bethlehem facilities, the use of Amazon Smile, where a part of each purchase comes to Bethlehem, Stewardship and the Executive Committee has already sent out an email asking for Pledges for 2019 if you haven't already pledged.

As we have spoken here many of times, Bethlehem needs to grow in both membership and revenue, each of us can do our part to assist in that effort. This could be in the form of assisting one time on a Church function, witnessing to a family member or friend so they may consider Bethlehem, making a Pledge, increasing your Pledge and of course praying for Bethlehem. I know we all have very busy lives but your additional commitment in 2019 will help Bethlehem to grow and prosper.

I thank you in advance for your additional commitment to Bethlehem in 2019!

Tim Fox Council Secretary



2019 has passed and as we reminisce over the past year, many thoughts come to mind. I know I certainly could have done better. Some things I would like to do over but 'do-overs' aren't happening. There are always regrets. But if we really, really think about it, we have all been blessed beyond any expectations we could have had. I am reminded of a devotion written by Sarah Young in *Jesus Always* which reminds me that Jesus has been beside me - and you - through each and every day of 2018 and He will be with us in 2019! He is always present no matter our circumstances and He will never leave us. How better to begin the new year than with Jesus by our side!

Bethlehem Lutheran's WELCA Board will convene for the new year in February with Suzanne Lehto as our new secretary and Jane Passmore as chairperson of Ruth Circle. We are still in need of a Vice President and would invite you to consider this position. A reminder that any woman who is a member of Bethlehem Lutheran is already a member of WELCA - Women of the Lutheran Church in America! You do not have to belong to a circle - just be a member of the church.

However, we would also like you to consider becoming a member of one of our circles. We have three to choose from: Ruth Circle meets on the second Tuesday of the month in the evening; Sarah Circle meets the second Tuesday of the month at noon; and Rebecca/Anna Circle meets the second Thursday of the month at 1PM. There is food, fellowship and fun along with a Bible Study. For the circles who follow the *Gather* magazine Bible Study, the theme for January is "Meetings with Jesus: Come and see. Seeking and finding faith." For further information, please contact Nancy Ammann 946-8433 and we will set you up!

MAY YOU ALL HAVE A BLESSED 2019!



Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

On January 6, the Season of Epiphany Begins. It is a season when we commemorate the manifestation of Christ To the Gentiles. In the ELCA it is a time to emphasize Global Mission And the ministry of the Church across the world.

Ministry and Service in the Holy Land

A call to the ministry of word, sacrament, and welcome in Jerusalem is led by the Rev. Carrie Ballenger Smith an ELCA missionary serving as the pastor of the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem. She tells about her journey as a pastor and her role as a woman and leader in her community. Smith is one of 230 missionaries currently serving alongside our global companions in more than 40 countries. She serves not only Redeemer, but also is the assistant to the bishop of the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL)** and welcomes ELCA members and groups during their visits to the Holy Land.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with the ELCA

Interested in visiting the Holy Land? Curious how your gifts to ELCA global mission make an impact in this part of the world? Do you have a desire to potentially increase your investment in ELCA ministries? Join the ELCA on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in March 2019. We will visit with our companions, the church Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land; spend time with ELCA missionaries and YAGM volunteers; and walk in the footsteps of Jesus at holy sites in Jerusalem and the West Bank, as well as a visit to Petra in Jordan. Trip dates: March 16-30, 2019. Cost: \$5,000 (including flight, food, accommodation, transportation). For a trip brochure and more information, email Andrew G. Steele, director for ELCA Global Church Sponsorship: Andrew.Steele@elca.org

The Struggle, and the Journey, are Real -- Young Adults in Global Mission

The Rev. Kirsten Laderach serves as the country coordinator for the YAGM program in Madagascar and <u>recently shared some of her experiences</u>. Read her powerful narrative about what it is like to shepherd young adults as they discern their calling in the YAGM program. http://www.ecclesio.com/2018/11/struggle-learning-realby-kirsten-laderach/



Has taken its meetings into the Community. We now meet on the 4th Tuesday at 5:30 at the Cottage Café (During the summer only back at church. You can choose a meal or just join in the discussion. ALL ARE WELCOME & bring a friend. On January 22, we will discuss "Before We Were Yours" by Wingate, and on February 26, we will discuss "A Gentleman in Moscow" By Towles.

FROM THE RUTH CIRCLE: Many thanks to all who attended Our Annual Luncheon. Also to all who helped, those who made cookies and loaned kitchen equipment; Christine Hubert— Food Chair; Kim Mende—Decoration Chair; Donna Novak—Song Leader, and particularly, the MEN who helped set up, serve, and clean up. Also Thank You to Christian Ed and the Sunday School Children who presented the program

<u>OLESON'S RECEIPTS</u>. Please continue to bring in your Oleson's cash register receipts. We recently received a check for \$253.70. Thanks to all, especially Oleson's

UPDATED INFORMATION: AED CERTIFICATION: We now have a full class of 9 people signed up to take the CPR & AED class representing most goups in the church. We are accepting donations so we can pay the \$700 class and fro updating our equipment. The date has been set for January 20. If you wish to contribute please use an envelope marked CPR/AED and place it in the offering plate. Thank you for your generosity....The Christensen Small Group@231-835-0900

Finger-Food Fellowship!

Any person or group can sign up to bring Cookies or a Finger Food (requiring only a napkin) to serve on Sunday. One tray needs to be ready after both Sunday Services with someone to clean up after late service. PLEASE WRITE DOWN YOUR DATE—there is no reminder system for this. A wonderful ministry for members, but also to welcome visitors.



SHOP AT FAMILY FARE AND HELP RAISE *MO*NEY FOR QUILTS!!

Shop at Family Fare, 905 E. 8th Street here in Traverse City (or at any Family Fare in the area) and help raise money for quilts!

To warm others with more than a prayers, save register receipts when you shop Family Fare! Lutheran World Relief quilters need help from you. Bring Family Fare receipts to us that you could do. This helps raise money for the supplies it will take... for fabric, thread, and shipping necessary for the quilts we make!

Questions? Please call Betty Rutila at 231-947-1013



WELCOME TO OUR NEW PAGE



"We Care for God's Creation"

This page will be a monthly feature page in the Star dedicated to taking care of our environment and appreciating the bounty that God has given us. We are going to be looking for your contributions. Help us highlight our gratitude to Him from whom flows all blessings. Please

contact Judy Strickland with your ideas or the church office.

Caring for God's Creation

Suggested New Year's Resolutions

Protection of God's Creation

- 1. I will reduce my use of electricity. I can use energy efficient light bulbs, turn off lights and appliances when not in use.
- 2. I will avoid single use products when possible. I can refuse straws or unneeded bags.
- 3. I will use water wisely.
- 4. I will plan my yard and garden to compliment God's creation.
- 5. I will not waste food. I will use food before it spoils and not eat junk food.
- 6. I will use recycled items whenever possible.
- 7. I will not take unnecessary containers. I can bring my own container for bringing back food from a restaurant. I can take my own bag shopping.
- 8. I will decrease litter.
- 9. I will limit my use of gasoline by walking, car pooling, or combining trips.

Natural Revelation

God reveals himself through his creation. Appreciating his creation is one way that strengthens our faith and brings us closer to God. Some suggested resolutions follow.

- 1. I will spend time in God's Creation by walking, sitting, playing or doing some other activity outside.
- 2. I will appreciate what I see when I look out the window.
- 3. I will look for ways to join others in appreciating God's Creation.
- 4. I will find ways to find a closeness to God's Creation through the media.

Please let us know if you have other suggestions or would like to expand on a suggestion in a future page.

Happy New Year enjoying and caring for God's Creation.

----FROM JUDY STRICKLAND



The Worship & Music Committee has restored the custom of honoring new members of the family of God with a rose at the Altar. Those who wish to celebrate their new child or grandchild can contact the church office. The cost is \$10.00 to be submitted to the church office, or labeled as such and placed in the collection plate. The rose and vase can be taken by the family after the 11:00 service on Sunday.

Musicality

Another way to support your Bethlehem Music Department is to join one of the music groups. Depending on the one you join, you could be a part of services every 2 months, once a month, once every three weeks, or about every other week. They all have different schedules. What fits you best?

Your choices are steel pans, bells, Worship Team, and choir. They rehearse once a week with trained directors and really build up quite a comradery. It's fun. Think about it.





Did you know Love In the Name of Christ has a Medical Equipment Loan Ministry? If you, a friend or a family members needs a wheelchair, walker, cane, bathroom equipment or more, we can help! We have closet locations at Christ the King in Acme, Grace Episcopal mid-town, St. Patrick in the Grawn area and at the Love INC offices on East Front Street. Call
941-5683 to speak with us about a loan or a donation of equipment. Thanks to our partnership you can have love and care at home!

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is always looking for volunteers:

- 1. Skilled/Unskilled volunteers to serve as site coaches leading and teaching groups of volunteers in finish carpentry. No experience necessary.
- 2. Committee Members. Time commitment is about three hours a month. Committees needing members are Faith Relations, Family Selection and Events.
- 3. Re-Store volunteers / Donation drives / Pickup and Delivery
- 4. Lunch volunteers to feed construction site crews.
- 5. Deconstruction teams to salvage materials to be sold at the Re-Sale Store. If you're interested in helping out, please call Michelle Reichert at 231-941-4663



Health Concerns*

Richard Fernholz, Nancy Smith, Hazel Lautner, Margie Whitney, Jo Hasse, Mary Gordon, Ruth Boerman, Linda Davis, Ellie Tacke, Vern and Bev Attwood, Cheryl Clark, Roy Stowe, Kate Holtfreter, Joyce Rombouts, Priscilla Thompson, Marlene Baesch, Alvin Kober, Sharon Stowe, Bill Gordie, Mandy Hitesman, Dee Springer, Bill Gibson, and Arline Stowe

<u>Grand Traverse Pavilions:</u> Vern & Bev Attwood, Bill Gourdie <u>Homebound:</u> Hazel Lautner, Ruth Boerman <u>Traverse Manor:</u> Margie Whitney/MedLodge: Priscilla Thompson <u>French Manor LaFranier:</u> Jo Hasse, Joyce Rombouts <u>French Manor:</u> Mary Gordon <u>Boardman Lake Glens:</u> Inge Thomas

Hospital Visits: Please let the church office know if you are going into the hospital for a scheduled procedure or an emergency so Pastor Paul can visit you.



BLC's PRAYER CHAIN is always seeking partners in prayer. More volunteers are needed for this crucial ministry. For more information or to set the Prayer Chain in motion, call Jan Stretlien @ 947-3265 or email jstretlien@gmail.net

*If you would like your name, or the name of a loved one, to appear on this list which appears here and in the weekly bulletin, please call the church office at 947-9880.

Are you checking for the latest BLC updates at: <u>www.bethlehemtc.org</u>?

You saw Norm and others take the photos...be sure you see them at <u>www.bethlehemtc.org</u>!

Good News...and great news...at www.bethlehemtc.org...













OPTIONS FOR OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

*****BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT:** Munson Hospice Bereavement Support Groups and Programs are available to the general public free of charge. Many groups and dates are available. (See flier on outside of Office) There is a workshop starting January 16 in Traverse City—"Understanding Your Grief" which meets for 10 weeks.

<u>****FATHER FRED:**</u> Wednesday morning volunteers now needed. The typical shift is10-2pm and you will receive an orientation and work with another volunteer that will help train you. Contact: Elaine Keaton at 231-947-2055 Ext: 118 or <u>ekeaton@fatherfred.org</u>

****GRAND TRAVERSE BAY AREA STROKE CLUB:** Provides Monthly opportunities. Next event: "Rebuilding Balance after Stroke" January 9, 2019. Most meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 2:30-4:30 at the Presbyterian Church located on Westminster Road. Contact Melinda Hollands, at 935-6380

****CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH:** Volunteers to feed the local homeless and financially insecure, a free meal 7 days a week....any level of commitment is welcome. To volunteer, contact Rev. Jane Lippert at janerobertalippert@gmail.com or 231-946-5191

<u>IMPORTANT NAME CHANGE</u>**: Love, Inc will now be known as "LOVE thy Neighbor" All phone #'s and emails for contact remain the same. Life Skills Classes: January 9—Basic Budgeting/January 16—Basic Budgeting continued. Classes are held at Journey Wesleyan Church on S. Airport—Register by call 231-941-5683.</u>

BLC Contacts PLEASE NOTE SEVERAL ADDRESS UPDATES

Church Office

Pastor Paul Busekist Admin. Asst. Sharon Weller Admin. Aide Renae Wells Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson Sharon Weller, Music Director Alexis Steig, Youth & Outreach Director Website

paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org admin@bethlehemtc.org admin@bethlehemtc.org bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org sharon.weller@bethlehemtc.org alexis.steig@bethlehemtc.org www.bethlehemtc.org

Church Council

Jim Parkinson, President Chuck Ardingo, Vice President Tim Fox, Secretary Dave Peppler, Treasurer Shelly McAllister, Financial Sec. Phil Anderson, Bethlehem Vision Jan Stretlien, Christian Care Giving Barbara Graf, Christian Ed. LoAnn VandeLeest, Evangelism Chuck Ardingo, Fellowship LoAnn VandeLeest, Membership LoAnn VandeLeest, Personnel Chuck Ardingo, Property Barbara Wright, Stewardship Nancy Downer, Worship and Music Barbara Graf, Youth/Y2A

president.council@bethlehemtc.org vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org treasurer.council@bethlehemtc.org Secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org Bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org christiancaregiving.committee@bethlehemtc.org christianeducation@bethlehemtc.org evangelism@bethlehemtc.org fellowship.committee@bethlehemtc.org membershipevangelism.committee@bethlehemtc.org personnel.committee@bethlehemtc.org property.committee@bethlehemtc.org stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org worship.committee@bethlehemtc.org vouth.committee@bethlehemtc.org

If you have an interest in serving on any of the above Committees, Please contact the Committee Chairperson(s).

BLC - Non assigned mtg. space, Conference Room, Event Held Outside of BLC, Fellowship Hall, Gathering Space, Lower Room 2, Jan 2019 (Eastern Time - New York) Lower Room 3, Lower Room 4, Nursery Room 1, Nursery Room 3, Nursery Room No #, Sanctuary, Youth Room

| | | | | | 6pm - Sew Pieceful Quilters 6:30pm - Gamblers | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| | | 7 pm - Choir Rehearsal | | 3pm - LessonsWarne | 3pm - Lessons/Weller | 1pm - BLUES @ Twin Lakes |
| | | 6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal | | 9am - Property Work Group | 10am - Staff Meeting | 11am - Modern Worship - S |
| | | 5:30pm - ACOA (LR) | 6pm - Worship Team | 9am - Prayer Shawl | 10am - Alanon-LR3 | 9:45am - Sunday School |
| | | 3 pm - LessonsWarne | 3pm - Lessons/Weller | 9am - LWR Quilting | 10am - AlAnon-B | 8:45am - Worship Service |
| 2 | - | 31 | 30 | 29 | 28 | 27 |
| | | | | | | 1:15pm - Confirmation |
| | | | | | | 1pm - Drive My Way |
| | | 7 pm - Choir Rehearsal | | 5:30pm - Newcomers | 6:30pm - Gamblers | 1pm - AED TRAINING |
| | | 6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal | | 5:30pm - Book/Supper Club | 3pm - Oster SG | 12:30pm - Monroe SG |
| | 2:30pm - Front Street Jazz | 5:30pm - ACOA (LR) | | 3 pm - LessonsWarne | 3pm - Lessons/Weller | 11am - Modern Worship - S |
| | 10am - Alanon-LR3 | 3pm - LessonsWarne | 6pm - Worship Team | 9am - Property Work Group | 10am - Staff Meeting | 11am - Christensen SG |
| 5pm - Worship-S | 10am - AlAnon-B | 1pm - Lehto SG | 3pm - Lessons/Weller | 9am - Prayer Shawl | 10am - Alanon-LR3 | 9:45am - Sunday School |
| Lederer/Chikas Wedding | Lederer/Chickas Rehearsal | 9am - Baby Pantry-FH | 1pm - Johnson SG (Offsite) | 9am - LWR Quilting | 10am - AlAnon-B | 8:45am - Worship Service |
| 26 | 25 | 24 | 23 | 22 | 21 | 20 |
| | | | | 7 pm - Lautner SG @ at the | 6:30pm - Gamblers | |
| | | 7 pm - Choir Rehearsal | | 6pm - Council Meeting | 6pm - Sew Pieceful Quilters | |
| | 4 pm - Drive My Way | 6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal | | 3pm - LessonsWarne | 3pm - Lessons/Weller | 11am - Modern Worship - S |
| | 2:30pm - Front Street Jazz | 5:30pm - ACOA (LR) | 6pm - Worship Team | 9am - Property Work Group | 10am - Staff Meeting | 9:45am - Sunday School |
| 5pm - Worship-S | 10am - Alanon-LR3 | 3 pm - LessonsWarne | 3pm - Lessons/Weller | 9am - Prayer Shawl | 10am - Alanon-LR3 | 9 am - PANCAKE |
| 1pm - Drive My Way | 10am - AlAnon-B | 12pm - XYZ | 2pm - Stewardship Mtg. | 9am - LWR Quilting | 10am - AlAnon-B | 8:45am - Worship Service |
| 19 | 18 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 |
| | | | | 7 pm - Ruth Circle (GS) | | |
| | | | | 7 pm - RUTH CIRCLE | | |
| | | | | 6pm - Christian Ed Meeting | | |
| | | 7 pm - Choir Rehearsal | | 3pm - LessonsWarne | | |
| | | 6pm - Y2A Meeting | | 3pm - Executive Committee | | 1 pm - All Star DE |
| | 7 pm - Bridge-GS | 6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal | | 12pm - Sarah Circle | 6:30pm - Gamblers | 12:30pm - Wor. & Mus. |
| | 6pm - Faith and Family | 5:30pm - ACOA (LR) | 6pm - Worship Team | 10am - Finance-CR | 3pm - Lessons/Weller | 11am - Modern Worship - S |
| | 2:30pm - Front Street Jazz | 3pm - LessonsWarne | 3pm - Lessons/Weller | 9am - Property Work Group | 10am - Staff Meeting | 9:45am - Sunday School |
| | 10am - Alanon-LR3 | 1pm - Rebecca/Ann Circle | 2pm - Communion Party-BR | 9am - Prayer Shawl | 10am - Alanon-LR3 | 9:45am - Membership & |
| 5pm - Worship-S | 10am - AlAnon-B | 9am - Baby Pantry-FH | 2pm - ALS Support Group | 9am - LWR Quilting | 10am - AlAnon-B | 8:45am - Worship Service |
| 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 |
| | | 7 pm - Choir Rehearsal | | | | |
| 5pm - Worship-S | 2:30pm - Front Street Jazz | 6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal | 6pm - Worship Team | | | |
| 5pm - Celebrate! Worship | 10am - Alanon-LR3 | 5:30pm - ACOA (LR) | 3pm - Lessons/Weller | 3 pm - LessonsWarne | | |
| 9am - All Star DE | 10am - AlAnon-B | 3 pm - LessonsWarne | 9am - All Star DE | Office Closed | | |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 31 | 30 |
| Sat | Fri | Thu | Wed | Tue | Mon | Sun |

NEW STAR ADS PAGE UNDER CONSTRUCTION



SEE PAGE 9 FOR EXPLANATION

EXAMPLE:

My Business (or Organization) 12345 My Street My Town, My State 12345 Ph: 231-456-7890 <u>myemail@mywebsite.com</u> Specializing in Lion Taming

