

April 2025



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastor Paul Busekist
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880

Full
to the **Brim**
An expansive lent

Website: www.bethlehemtc.org
Email: bethlehem@bethlehemtc.org

Building Hours:

Monday – Thursday, 9am to 2:30pm

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday, 9am to 2:30pm

Worship Times:

Sunday: 10 am Modern Worship including
Communion with service Livestreamed on
Facebook and YouTube

Sunday School/Adult Education: 9:15am

Third Thursday Worship: 7:00pm

Nursery open during worship service

Follow the STAR to Bethlehem!

Our Mission:

We worship, work and welcome... Sharing God's love and grace with all.

Our Vision:

Together, we embody our mission by **BOLDLY** following Jesus, serving the needs of the world and one another, and caring for all of God's Creation. **ALL ARE WELCOME.**



Friends, there's so much going on, with Lent in full swing, Easter on the way, and summer on the horizon... this month we'll just list all the excitement, point by point!

- **First, I want to express how much I have enjoyed A Sanctified Art's "Full to the Brim: An Expansive Lent" with you thus far.** In a world that seems increasingly hectic and challenging, we continue to find God's hope in in our midst, and the gospel call that lies ahead of us.
- **Along those lines, we have two more awesome Lenten treats this year:** the **"Living Last Supper"** hosted again at Bethlehem this April 10th (on a Thursday Lent Night) including dinner with Jesus and the Disciples (ahem, the "cast") at 5:30pm and the performance at 7pm; and our wonderful 2025 **First Communion Class** partaking in the Eucharist for the first time on Maundy Thursday, April 17th at Bethlehem. Check elsewhere in your STAR and bulletins for the full Holy Week schedule.
- **Speaking of our gospel calling, it seems appropriate to celebrate an amazing "school year" thus far.** Our visioning efforts last fall through this past January were nothing short of inspiring. On **May 18th** after worship, we invite you all to express your interest in helping us move forward in our church, community and world – as we rally around our three new vision and mission focus areas: New Life Together, Social Ministry and Outreach, and Creation Care. More about this later...
- **Next, synod assembly is around the corner,** and this will be a big one (with a bishop election and in-person gathering) held this year **in Mount Pleasant May 18-20.** Pray for our church – in Michigan and beyond – as we continue this gospel journey together.
- Finally, a week or so after Easter, our Wednesday Zoom and in-person Book and Bible study group will be reading a book by Paul E. Miller called **A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World.** Prayer is something a lot of us folks struggle with: how to pray, when to pray, and what prayer really means – to name a few... After reading just a few pages thus far, I find Miller's perspective to be both practical and deeply spiritual. We welcome all who would like to join us for **five Wednesdays in late April through May, 1:30pm to 3pm, on Zoom or in the Youth Room.**

I am sure that I'm missing something, but all will be well. ☺ Much peace, and a blessed Lent and April!

-Pastor Paul

PROSE FROM THE PREZ:

By the time you read this we will be on the road AGAIN!!! This time we will be visiting Jim's sister Joanne in Ohio (those of you on the prayer chain have been including her in your prayers). Then to a wedding of Cindy's grandniece in the Grand Rapids area. Finally, time to enjoy the joy of tulips and the Children's parade in Holland in which the 2 youngest grandkids will participate. Whew!!

I wanted to take a moment to give a brief update on Solar Power since many of you have been asking. Yes, it has been doing what we hoped it would do. In fact, in a conversation with Solar Faithful, they felt it was generating even more power than they expected. It is no surprise that there was no power generated in Jan with all of the gray skies and snow. But even with many gray days in Feb we generated over 1,000 kwh resulting in a \$395 reduction in the electric bill. And as the sun keeps shining on us, so should the power keep increasing.

Blessings as we hopefully "kick the white stuff to the curb" and enjoy new life around us.

Cindy Monroe BLC Council President

FEBRUARY 2025 FINANCIAL NEWS

February income was \$29,039 compared to budgeted income of \$30,043. We received \$1,004 less than budgeted. Expenses were \$41,647 compared to a budget of \$32,488. We spent \$9,159 more than budgeted primarily due to unexpected maintenance expense and annual maintenance agreements of \$10,568 with Temperature Control and Summit Fire Protection. For the month we spent \$12,608 more than we brought in.

Year to date income was \$68,523 compared to budgeted income of \$60,037. We have received \$8,486 more than budgeted. Expenses were \$79,931 compared to a budget of \$69,888. We spent \$10,043 more than budgeted. For the year, the church has spent \$11,408 more than we have brought in.

Dear Bethlehem Family and Friends, I am writing to thank each one of you for your prayers, cards, calls, notes, flowers, and small gifts. I appreciate them so much! It has also been wonderful for the folks who have stepped up and provided transportation to a myriad of doctor appointments. I am improving since my fall in January, but it seems like a slow process. The doctor granted me permission to drive locally and only for short time spans. The frontal lobe of my brain is still healing and it is hoped I will make a full recovery in about three months. It has been a great to know that when I have needed it, an abundance of support and love have made my situation much easier. With love and gratitude, Carolyn Mann

NEW MEMBER RECEPTION: We welcome the following new members on either April 27 or May 4 during the 10:00 service. Please greet them after the service



Linda Hansen sponsored by Brian and Laura Acker and family
Fred and Linda Reyelts sponsored by Chris and Renna' Walter
Brad Schuler sponsored by Zeke Clemons
Dave and Lindsay Susalski sponsored by Peggy Burns
Gail Tokie (returning member) sponsored by Jacky Putman

What IS GRIEVING? Could it be the loss of a marriage, your home, or community, good health, a dream or something else? The list can go on and on. No matter the loss you have a family here at Bethlehem that loves you, wants to support you, and be here for you! We meet here on the first Monday of the month from 3:30-4:30 and on the third Monday from 5:30-6:30. If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Burns 231-392-6913.

HOW DO WE CARE AND SERVE? John 12:26 "Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant will also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me".

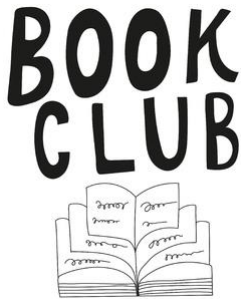
YOU ARE LOVED BY YOUR CHURCH FAMLY. If you would like to have a visit and you would like to receive Communion, Christian Care Giving is here for you! Please let Peggy Burns at 231-392-6914 know and we will have one of our Care Givers come and see you.

CHAIR YOGA: Chair Yoga will continues every Monday at 3:00 in the Fellowship Hall. Cost is \$5.00 per person. It is slow paced stretches that helps with balance, flexibility and relaxation. Come and try it out.



April's XYZ meeting will be on Friday, April 11th, at 12pm noon. Our presenter in April will be Annie Solem from Thrive Medical Clinic (formerly the Pregnancy Care Center), sharing their most recent patient story video and their newly developed education resource for the faith community, "How to Be a Safe Place for Someone in An Unplanned Pregnancy." We hope you can join us for lunch and a great presentation! All adults are welcome!

A big thank you to all who have turned in Olesons' slips. On January 7th, we received a check from Olesons for \$317.06. Olesons' slips never expire. Please continue to turn in your Olesons receipts to Bethlehem. Thanks so much!!! **Also, the area for the Oleson receipts is in the lower cabinets below the mailboxes (under the A-B-Cs...).** The cabinet door is marked with the receptacle inside. Unfortunately, we are no longer collecting the receipts from Family Fair.



BOOK CLUB NEWS: The next meeting will be Wed, Apr 16 at 5:30. We will be reading "*Remarkably Bright Creatures*" by Shelby Van Pelt. Please enter the kitchen door and join us in the Fellowship Hall if you like to discuss good books. Any questions can be directed to Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

In a recent message Pastor reminded us that God's love is abundant and urges us to truly live into God's word and share our abundance with others. We can give God's love to others and help others find their way out of the desert. I urge you to continue donating non-perishable goods to stock our food pantry. With food prices on the rise, your help is more important than ever. Now that the weather is getting warmer, we can again make canned goods available. Remember, you can use a Thrivent grant for up to \$250 to help us restock our supplies. We appreciate your continued support. In God's love, Suzanne and Kathie

DRIVING VOLUNTEERS?: Thanks to those who have already said "yes" to being a regular or substitute driver to transport a delightful member couple to church. They have good mobility but due to other health issues currently cannot drive. They live at the east end of 14th street so it should be an easy pick-up and drop off for any members coming from the south or west side of town. They will be out of town with their family during the months of Feb and March, so rides will need to be lined up as of the beginning of April. If you would like to be added to the list of volunteers please contact Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net or 231 631 0887.

The season of Lent is here, and the promise of Easter is just around the corner.

From the Fellowship Committee's perspective, that means planning for food and fellowship during this holy season.

- There will be a meal before the Lenten service on
- Kitchen help would be greatly appreciated; you pick the dates that work for you. Any questions, please contact Gail Goldsmith ggoldsmith74@gmail.com Or 231-633-2630. Thank you! There will be a sign-up in the Narthex
- There will be a Seder meal at 5:30pm prior to the Living Last Supper presentation on April 10th.

Lenten Service Schedule:

April 3—Taize 1, 7:00pm

April 10—Living Last Supper, 7:00pm



Lenten Dinners

Dinners will begin at 5:45

- April 3rd Terry Farmer is making Italian beef, we will have cheese and buns for the sandwiches. Also coleslaw, chips, carrot cake, lemonade and iced tea.
- April 10th will be the Last Supper Reenactment at Bethlehem and we will invite community members and the actors for dinner. We will have foods similar to a Passover Seder. Norm Fred is making matzo ball soup, Terry Farmer is making brisket, the Fellowship Committee will make baked chicken, a vegetable rice dish, salad, Charoset with matzo crackers with macaroons for dessert and drinks. This dinner will begin at 5:30.



We are wanting to update the list of people we pray for. If everyone could look at list and let us know of any changes, whether it is people who can be taken off, or should be added, we would appreciate it. Please respond by email to admin@bethlehemtc.org

WE NEED YOU!!!! Can you do something more? What about stepping forward to being on council? There will be three-3 year positions and two-2 year positions open because of some unexpected relocations of some council members during the past year. There will also be openings on the Sustaining Endowment and Mission Endowment Committees. Please submit your names to anyone on council, on those committees or in the office. And even if you cannot volunteer, please try to be at **the Congregational Meeting on June 8 after the service** to learn what's going on and to VOTE.

\$36,930.00 Not any longer! Thanks to all who have given to our basement renovation fund! We are in a strong position to meet our \$70,000 goal. That is because we now have: **\$40,690.00** We might be doing things backwards, since we have already signed contracts with an asbestos tile remover and Ayers Basement who will dig a trench to solve the ongoing water problem and add two sump pumps. We can surely see God's hand in this. We still need you to:

- Pray for this project –the funding and the future opportunities it will bring
- Give towards the cost of this huge project. As we like to say, "All are Welcome" to donate.

Thanks.

- If you have any questions about this please call Bethany Uhl. (540) 598-3170 or bethanyuhl@gmail.com

Notes From Alanna

XYZ - Two More This Season!

We only have two more XYZ meetings this season! In April we will have Annie Solem from Thrive Medical Clinic visit us, and in May we will be taking a field trip to Copemish to visit the Archangel Ancient Tree Archive! Please mark on your calendars that the May date is actually the first Friday instead of the second. I'm looking forward to both of these, and hope to see you there! All adults are welcome to join us!



Mark your calendars for VBS!

VBS for this summer is scheduled for July 28-30th! If you volunteered last year and want to be involved again, or if you are new to it, I would love to add you to my list! There's something for everyone and all skill sets. Let me know if you want to help!

-Alanna Steffunick-Boomer, Ministry Coordinator

Christian Education News April 2025

Easter Sunday 4/20/2025

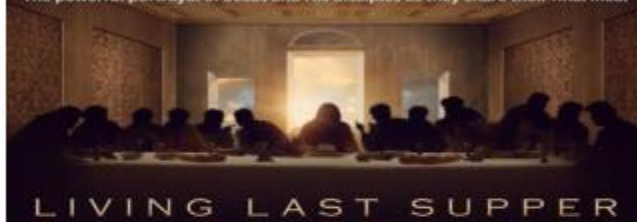
Worship service 8am

Breakfast 9am: food, fellowship, & fun – for ALL ages!!!

Worship service 10am



The powerful portrayal of Jesus and His disciples as they share their final meal

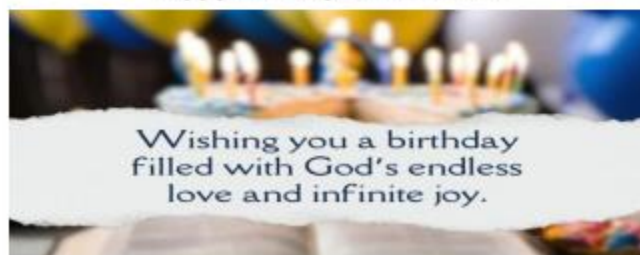


Mark your calendars & plan to join us!

WHEN: Thursday, April 10th

WHAT: dinner at 5:30pm with worship & performance

Happy Birthday, Pastor Paul –



We wish you the very best of God's blessings!



First Communion celebration

4/17/2025 Maundy Thursday

for Parker, Braxton, Camden, & Harrison
Congratulations & God's Blessings!!!

ELCA Global Links



Students at Martin Luther Seminary, Lae, Papua New Guinea

Preparing for a dance procession at the Companion Synod Consultation with ELCA visitors

The consultation brought together representatives from four ELCA synods and their counterparts in four districts of the ELC-PNG (Evangelical Lutheran Church-Papua New Guinea).

The Northwest Lower Michigan Synod partners with the Papua District of ELC-PNG. They traveled 180 miles west of the capital, Port Moresby, to the literal end of the road.

When [village] residents asked, "Why did you come?" the visitors answered that they had been invited. Upon listening further, they realized that the question was actually "Why did two people - all the way from America - take the time to come here?"

"We were the first of any member of the ELCA to ever visit," said David Hueter, pastor of **St. Thomas Lutheran Church, Cheboygan, Mich.** "But then, this is what accompaniment is all about ... walking with, listening to and learning from one another. The road was rough. ... I wasn't thrilled with all the cockroaches in our lodging. ... But it was about the people and our experience together. That was worth it!" For full details about the consultation: www.livinglutheran.org/2025/01/a-reigniting-of-relationships/



WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM - APRIL 2025

May you feel Christ's love in your hearts and be filled with His peace and joy this Easter Day - and always!

SAVE THE DATE! SPRING GATHERING: Saturday, April 26, 2025 at st. Paul Lutheran, Reed City, MI. Join us for a day of fellowship and growing in Christ, exploring how we can encourage one another in every situation. Speaker will be from House of Hope. We are encouraged to bring in-kind gifts of toiletries for women at the House of Hope.. Watch for a signup sheet in April as well as notices in the bulletin and online. Join us for a great day of fellowship!

APRIL BIBLE STUDY: "Session #4: Faith risks: Jairus and the faithful woman. When both Jairus and the woman who is bleeding reach out in their pain and disappointments, Jesus meets them with compassion. Jesus is present in our actions as well, when our listening and grace makes us stand out from the world around us." If you are interested in joining our study, please call Nancy Ammann at 946-8433 to find out the times and dates of the meetings. Join Us!

Easter spells out beauty - the rare beauty of New Life. (S. D. Gordon)

Health Concerns*



The Power of Prayer

*Mary Woodring, Jerry Hill, Jef Mort,
Richard Fernholz, Tom & Lee Miller,
Judy Fenton, Julie Lapeer, Milt & Carol Bowes,
Lynn Hoyt, Ron Hellenga, Cindy Hitesman,
John Stretlien, Harper Wiemerslage,
Sherry, Leroy Schlagel, Roy Dumond, Sean Rivard,
Patti McCracken, Sharon Vanmeter, Dale Thiel,
Carol Collins, Julie, Steve, Christine,
Patience Lambert, Dale & Cheryl Leider, Julie Barrett,
Jennifer Mowers, Debbie Knopf, Janet Burmeister,
Jim Rumbach, John Block, Bob Pierce,
Billie Thompson, Earl Manuel, Marianne
Norm Fred, Kyle Scheunaman, Ben*

Meadow Valley: Milt & Carol Bowes

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.

Prayer Requests:

- Prayer Chain:** Please contact Jan Stretlien at jstretlien@gmail.com or 231-947-3265
- Prayers read from the altar:** Please call the Administrative Assistant in the church office 231-947-9880 or email admin@bethlehemtc.org

Are you checking for the latest BLC updates at: www.bethlehemtc.org?

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

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

Looking for a link to last month's full Council minutes?
Type this address/url into your web browser to get the latest approved minutes from Council (or call the office for a copy:

bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes

BLC Contacts

Church Office

Pastor Paul Busekist	paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org
Admin. Asst., Barbara Oster	admin@bethlehemtc.org
Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson	bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org
Tony Bero, Music Director	bero.tony@gmail.com
Alanna Steffunick-Boomer, Ministry Coordinator	Alanna.Steffunick@bethlehemtc.org
Website	www.bethlehemtc.org

Church Council

Cindy Monroe, President	president.council@bethlehemtc.org
Gail Goldsmith, Vice President	vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org
Paul Wiemerslage, Secretary	secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org
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Tina Dohm, Youth/Y2A	youth.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Pastor Paul Busekist	paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
<p>9am - First Communion</p> <p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - Worship Service(S)</p> <p>11:15am - Worship and Music</p> <p>12:30pm - Youth Discipleship</p> <p>2pm - Girl Scouts (Library)</p>	<p>2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>3pm - Chair Yoga</p> <p>3:30pm - Grief Group</p>	<p>Bulletin articles due today</p> <p>9am - LWR Quilters (FH)</p> <p>9am - Property Work Group</p>	<p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study -</p> <p>11:30am - Music Rehearsal</p> <p>1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study</p>	<p>5:30pm - ACA</p> <p>5:45pm - Lenten Meal</p> <p>7pm - Lenten Service</p>		<p>6pm - LifeRing Recovery Group</p> <p>8pm - AA</p>
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<p>9am - First Communion</p> <p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - Worship Service(S)</p> <p>11:15am - Worship and Music</p> <p>12:30pm - Youth Discipleship</p> <p>2pm - Girl Scouts (Library)</p>	<p>2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>3pm - Chair Yoga</p> <p>3:30pm - Grief Group</p>	<p>Bulletin articles due today</p> <p>9am - LWR Quilters (FH)</p> <p>9am - Property Work Group</p> <p>10:45am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>1pm - Friendship Bible Study</p> <p>6pm - Y2A/Christian Ed Meeting</p> <p>6:30pm - Executive Comtee.(Zoom)</p>	<p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study -</p> <p>11:30am - Music Rehearsal</p> <p>1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study</p>	<p>9am - Baby Pantry Setup</p> <p>10am - Baby Pantry-FH</p> <p>1pm - Rebecca Anna Circle -</p> <p>5:30pm - ACA</p> <p>5:30pm - Lenten Meal</p> <p>7pm - Living Last Supper</p>	<p>12pm - XYZ</p>	<p>6pm - LifeRing Recovery Group</p> <p>7pm - Contra Dance - Bayside</p>
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<p>PALM SUNDAY</p> <p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - Traditional Worship</p>	<p>8am - Mission Endowment (Zoom)</p> <p>1pm - Finance Cnte.</p> <p>2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>3pm - Chair Yoga</p>	<p>Bulletin articles due today</p> <p>9am - LWR Quilters (FH)</p> <p>9am - Property Work Group</p> <p>12pm - Sarah Circle - Library</p> <p>6:30pm - Council Meeting -</p>	<p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study -</p> <p>10am - Baby Pantry Seasonal</p> <p>11:30am - Music Rehearsal</p> <p>5:30pm - Book/Supper Club</p>	<p>Maundy Thursday</p> <p>5:30pm - ACA</p> <p>7pm - Maundy Thursday service</p>	<p>Good Friday</p> <p>10am - Sew Pieciful</p> <p>1pm - Lehto SG - Library</p> <p>7pm - Good Friday service</p>	<p>Easter Vigil</p> <p>6pm - LifeRing Recovery Group</p> <p>7pm - Easter Vigil</p> <p>8pm - AA</p>
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
<p>EASTER SUNDAY</p> <p>8am - Easter Service</p> <p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - Easter Service(S)</p>	<p>10am - Sustaining Endowment</p> <p>2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>3pm - Chair Yoga</p> <p>5:30pm - Grief Group</p>	<p>Bulletin articles due today</p> <p>9am - LWR Quilters (FH)</p> <p>9am - Property Work Group</p>	<p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study -</p> <p>11:30am - Music Rehearsal</p>	<p>5:30pm - ACA</p>	<p>STAR articles due today</p>	<p>6pm - LifeRing Recovery Group</p> <p>8pm - AA</p>
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
<p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - Worship Service(S)</p> <p>12:15pm - Saint Andrew's</p>	<p>2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>3pm - Chair Yoga</p>	<p>Bulletin articles due today</p> <p>9am - LWR Quilters (FH)</p> <p>9am - Property Work Group</p>	<p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study -</p> <p>11:30am - Music Rehearsal</p> <p>1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study</p>			



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Questions??? Please contact Alanna Steffunick-Boomer at 231-947-9880 or
alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org Make checks payable to BLC...put "Star Ad" on envelope.

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XYZ News
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Chair Yoga
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ELCA Global Links
Women of Bethlehem 2024
The Power of Prayer



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