

May 2025



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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



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.



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ at Bethlehem,

The above is a verse I try to keep front of mind and heart at all times. In a world that is becoming increasingly transactional and bent on “efficiency” over relationship and stewardship, it reminds me that this planet is not ours to plunder. We have been entrusted to take care of this earth, God’s earth, to help and love one another and all that our home contains – not as asset and liability brokers but as important caretakers in a complex web of life. That is a biblical mandate (see also Genesis 1:28 AND Genesis 2:15), and I believe it should inform how we live, love and manage our life journey.

This past month, some Bethlehem leaders and I had the privilege of attending an Earth Day/Week “Energy Open House” held by our cross-town Presbyterian partners on April 23rd. Not only is TC Presbyterian actualizing their own commitment to care for God’s creation in awesome ways, but they also gave us a nod for being the first church in Traverse City to install solar panels (TC Presby, I believe, is the second!) Drawing upon their inspiration, there are modeling NEW ways we all can partner more in the future to help save the planet (and save money), one small corner, one small step at a time.

That leads us to another exciting topic: our new **“Vision in Action” event on May 18th**. Now that we have three main vision areas, we would like to partner with YOU at Bethlehem to put into ACTION:

1. **‘Social Ministry and Outreach’ focus:** identifying ways Bethlehem can serve more widely and intentionally in the Traverse City and northern Michigan area/s. This can include activities both on- and off-site with the purpose of widening our service, presence and ministry in Christ’s name.
2. **‘New Life Together’ focus:** identifying ways Bethlehemers can grow deeper in relationship with one another. This could range from structured discipleship (i.e. evening bible study or other interest groups) to much less formal get-togethers (i.e. dinner “pods”).
3. **‘Creation Care’ focus:** identifying ways Bethlehem can actively steward God’s creation and/or intentionally wander/wonder faithfully in its midst. This includes everything from renewed earth-keeping practices to increased immersion in natural settings in practical and spiritual ways.

On May 18th after worship we will use the coffee hour briefly to inform and invite every member to see how God might be calling us all personally to select one of the above areas of our vision – as future participants or leaders – as we grow forward in our mission/vision together!

In peace and joy, Pr. Paul

PROSE FROM THE PREZ:

Somehow when I wrote last month’s message I was a month ahead of myself!!! Well, I guess that’s better than being a month behind. So now, this information is true. By the time you read this we will be on the road AGAIN!!! 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 on 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!!

Some of you may have noticed that despite the first stage of the lower level renovation getting done on time, the second stage has not started. I bet any of you who have ever been involved in a remodeling or renovation project know how things can get delayed and it is totally out of your control. That has happened, but there has been very direct contact made with the next company and they know that we are anxiously awaiting their start. Please keep the timely completion of the project in your prayers.

Blessings as we enjoy the greening of the earth and the brightening of our spirits.

Cindy Monroe BLC Council President

March 2025 FINANCIAL NEWS

March income was \$30,577 compared to budgeted income of \$30,118. We received \$459 more than budgeted. Expenses were \$33,517 compared to a budget of \$32,780. We spent \$737 more than budgeted. For the month we spent \$2,940 more than we brought in.

Year to date income was \$99,067 compared to budgeted income of \$90,155. We have received \$8,912 more than budgeted. Expenses were \$113,427 compared to a budget of \$102,688. We spent \$10,739 more than budgeted. For the year, the church has spent \$14,360 more than we have brought in.

NEW MEMBER RECEPTION: We welcome the following new members on 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. **Due to Peggy being out of town at the Synod Assembly on May 19th, there will not be a grief group on that date.** If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Burns 231-392-6913.

VISION IN ACTION: YES, you read that right!! The Vision Team, with the help of all who have so generously participated in the numerous congregation discussions, is ready to get us moving!! On Sunday, May 18, immediately following worship, we will gather for our coffee/fellowship time and you will be provided with exciting information regarding BLC's direction for the future. Our time together will be filled with some general information regarding our findings, brief discussion about how we anticipate moving forward, and small group time to hear specifically about three areas of direction. Snacks will be served and we are anticipating taking only one hour of your time. It is important that we have plenty of handouts as well as refreshments...you can help us in our preparation by signing up on the Sign Up Sheet that is posted in the narthex. This is going to be an informative time, an opportunity to say "How Can I Help," and a way to get connected as we move into the next phase of our life together. As the song goes: "We Got to Move It, Move It!!" Hope to see you there...check out the Sign Up Sheet in the narthex. Many Thanks! Your Vision Team

CHAIR YOGA: Chair Yoga 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.

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.

Our last XYZ before the summer will be on Friday, May 2nd! Please note that this is the first Friday of the month, not the second as is our usual. We will have our normal potluck lunch at church at 12pm noon. Afterwards, we have a special field trip planned to Archangel Ancient Tree Archive in Copemish, to learn about their mission to restore archive the genetics of ancient trees and propagate them to help reforesting efforts. The address we will be going to is 16884 Front Street, Copemish, MI 49625. We will plan to leave BLC between 12:45-1pm, for a 1:45-2pm arrival time in Copemish. All adults who are interested are welcome to join us for lunch and this special field trip! We hope to see you there!

National Cherry Festival Volunteer Opportunity Bethlehem Lutheran Church has the opportunity to volunteer 3 times at the National Cherry Festival to earn money for Pastor Paul's future Sabbatical. We are asking for 5 volunteers for each event to earn \$200 per shift from the Community Share Group. The sign up to volunteer has changed this year. Every person who volunteers will need to go online to the Festival Foundation Website and complete the waiver form and read the volunteer handbook.

This year we have volunteered for Monday, June 30th from 9:45 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. in the Souvenir tent.

We are also signed up for Tuesday July 1st from 9:45 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Pepsi tent.

And Thursday July 3rd from 9:45 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Pie and Ice Cream tent. We will need 7 people for this tent.

There are sign up sheets in the Narthex for each event. You can sign up for one or more events. Each day after our work shift we are invited to go to the Oasis to have lunch. It is nice to be able to sit down as a group and eat and have time to talk. If you have any questions please talk to Gail Goldsmith.

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: We are changing our location AND our date this month to the 4th Wednesday.. The next meeting will be **Wed, May 28 at 5:30.** We will be reading "*Signal Fires*" by Dani Shapiro. We will again be at the home of Betsy Morley for a potluck picnic. If you plan to come please contact Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net to indicate what you would like to bring for the meal. .

FOOD PANTRY NEWS Finally we are seeing glimpses of Spring. Hopefully it will stick around. The food pantry supplies are running low and could certainly use some donations. When shopping for donations, please consider items with protein like peanut butter, canned ravioli or spaghetti, tuna, and chicken. The items that we do not need any more of are dried beans, peas, and lentils. Right now we have plenty of soaps but can always use feminine care products. We don't have to worry about items in the pantry freezing any more so anything you donate can be used immediately. Thank you all for your continuing generosity and willingness to serve our community. Suzanne and Kathie **REMEMBER, YOU CAN GET A THRIVENT GRANT FOR UP TO \$250 FOR FOOD PANTRY ITEMS.**

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 just north of the east end of 14th street. If you would like to be added to the list of volunteers please contact Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net or 231 631 0887.

BLC partners with Old Town Playhouse for the musical telling the story of Moses in THE PRINCE OF EGYPT: How exciting that this summer we will have rehearsals for this amazing musical here in this building! If you want to audition to be on stage or be part of the supporting community choir you can follow this link to sign up: www.oldtownplayhouse.com/egypt Performances will be Aug 21 and 22 at 7:00 and Aug 23 at 2:00 at Milliken Auditorium. The youth will be running the concessions on Thursday, Aug 21 and their youth fund will receive the benefits. We need other volunteers for the two other performances and the funds earned can be designated to the charity or cause recommended by the volunteers. Bethlehem's Good Samaritan Fund? Project Feed the Kids? Safe Harbor? Grand Traverse Baby Pantry? Another idea? It's easy to sell items before the show and during intermission. Sign up in the gathering space or contact Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net or 231 631 0887 if you can help one of those days. Also, do you want to reserve tickets to see the show? If tickets are purchased in groups of 6 each will cost \$42 for an adult and \$18 for youth under the age of 18. Sign up sheets for the tickets will also be in the gathering space.

The Grand Traverse Baby Pantry works out of our church to provide a variety of baby items to almost 100 families each month. You may not know it, but they also provide food items and cleaning products when they are available. Right now the pantry is in critical need of household cleaning products. They have completely run out. Next time you're out shopping, please consider picking up a few cleaning products for the baby pantry. You can leave your donations in the coat room on the table. On behalf of the Grand Traverse Baby Pantry, thanks to all who continue to donate so that we can provide this much needed resource to the community.



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

Congregational Meeting



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.

Notes From Alanna

Special Field Trip to Archangel Ancient Tree Archive!

On Friday, May 2nd, the XYZ group will be taking a special field trip to Copemish to visit Archangel Ancient Tree Archive to learn about how they are assisting reforestation efforts by propagating the genetics of ancient trees. We will have our normal potluck lunch at church before heading for Copemish. All the details are in the bulletin - all adults are welcome to join us, and I hope to see you there!



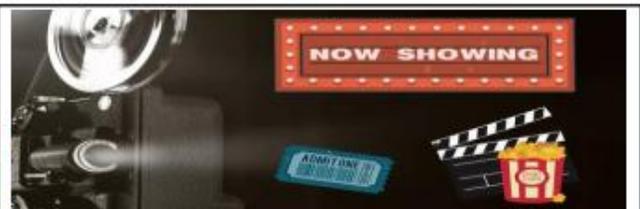
Movie Day!

We're hosting another movie day at Bethlehem! On Saturday, May 17th at 3pm, we will enjoy delicious popcorn while we watch the Disney Pixar film Ratatouille! Kids, parents, adults, and families are all welcome to join us - bring a friend! Hope to see you there!

-Alanna Steffunick-Boomer, Ministry Coordinator

Christian Education News May 2025

We're already starting to plan
for VBS this summer –
watch for more details soon!!!



FAMILY MOVIE!!!

3pm Saturday, May 17th

We'll watch "Ratatouille" and have popcorn & drinks!



We have LOTS of summer opportunities –
parking lot fundraisers, VBS, and so much more...
get involved & don't miss out!



ELCA Missionaries in Africa - Global Links - Snapshot of Impact



- **Twenty-eight mission personnel** are serving in **nine countries in Africa** in 2025.
- Mission personnel serve through **administration, education, evangelism, health care and gender justice**, and as regional representatives.
- ELCA synods and global companions **experience stronger engagement** for mission and ministry.

WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM - MAY 2025

To all women who nurture, mentor and show the way
for the next generation in hope, resilience and love...



You are the greatest!
HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

MAY BIBLE STUDY: The May study is taken from the Gather magazine. It is titled "receiving the Spirit's flame: Spiritual gifts in the life of the church" written by Cara Strickland. We will meet on Thursday, May 8th at 1PM in the library. Call Nancy Ammann 946-8433 for information. Please join us.

MEN'S EVENT: It's time the men of Bethlehem were honored! We will do that on Sunday, June 1st after worship. **ALL MEN** are invited to a delicious dinner to get acquainted with each other. There will be a poster and signup sheet for you in the Narthex. Please do so prior to May 25th.

We will need more help to make this event a success so we are asking the women of Bethlehem to step up to help us. There will be a signup sheet in the Narthex for you to do just that. There are many spots to be filled so please consider. A great time for fun and fellowship!



Health Concerns*



The Power of Prayer

*Mary Woodring, Jerry Hill,
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,
Debbie Knopf, Janet Burmeister,
Jim Rumbach, John Block, Bob Pierce,
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
Anthony 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
Dave Peppler, Treasurer	treasurer.council@bethlehemtc.org
Jim Monroe, Financial Sec.	financialsecretary.council@bethlehemtc.org
Peggy Burns, Christian Care Giving	christiancaregiving.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Tina Dohm, Christian Ed.	christianeducation.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Gail Goldsmith, Fellowship	fellowship.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Cindy Monroe, Membership/Evangelism	membershipevangelism.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Doug Cunningham, Property	property.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Maureen Bauer, Personnel	personnel.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Jana Rockne, Safety & Security	
Bethany Uhl, Stewardship	stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Denice Bossardet, Worship and Music	worshipmusic.committee@bethlehemtc.org
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
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
<p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - New Member Recognition</p> <p>10am - Worship Service(S)</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>9:30am - Adult Bible Study - Library</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>12pm -XYZ</p>	<p>5pm - LifeRing Recovery Group</p> <p>8pm -AA</p>
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - Worship Service(S)</p>	<p>1pm - Finance Cmte.</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>1pm - Friendship Bible Study</p> <p>6pm - Y2M/Christian Ed Meeting</p> <p>6:30pm - Executive Comite.(Zoom)</p>	<p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study - Library</p> <p>11:30am - Music Rehearsal</p> <p>1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study</p>	<p>5:30pm -ACA</p> <p>5:45pm - Third Thursday Meal</p> <p>7pm - Third Thursday Service</p>	<p>10am - Visitation - Brenda Denoyer</p> <p>11am - Funeral - Brenda Denoyer</p> <p>12pm - Luncheon - Brenda Denoye</p>	<p>10:30am -AAUW Set-up</p> <p>12pm -AAUW</p> <p>8pm - LifeRing Recovery Group</p> <p>7pm - Contra Dance - Baystate</p>
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
<p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - Worship Service(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>12pm - Sarah Circle - Library</p> <p>6:30pm - Council Meeting - Library</p>	<p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study - Library</p> <p>11:30am - Music Rehearsal</p> <p>1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study</p>	<p>5:30pm -ACA</p>	<p>10am - Sew Pieced!</p> <p>1pm - Lehto SG - Library</p>	<p>3pm - Movie Day</p> <p>6pm - LifeRing Recovery Group</p> <p>8pm -AA</p>
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - Worship Service(S)</p> <p>11:30am - Vision in Action</p> <p>2pm - Girl Scouts (Library)</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 - Library</p>	<p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study - Library</p> <p>11:30am - Music Rehearsal</p> <p>1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study</p> <p>5:30pm - Book/Supper Club</p>	<p>5:30pm -ACA</p>	<p>STAR articles due today</p>	<p>5pm - LifeRing Recovery Group</p> <p>8pm -AA</p>
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
<p>9:15am - Adult Education (YR)</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School</p> <p>10am - Worship Service(S)</p>	<p>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>Happy Memorial Day</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 - Library</p> <p>11:30am - Music Rehearsal</p> <p>1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study</p>	<p>5:30pm -ACA</p>		<p>5pm - LifeRing Recovery Group</p> <p>8pm -AA</p>



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Lots of cool information inside
Pr Paul's Page
Council President's notes
Council officers and committee liaisons
Grief Group
Book Club News
XYZ News
Vision News
Cherry Fest Volunteer Opportunities
Prince of Egypt at OTP
Chair Yoga
Notes from Alanna
Christian Education News
Financial News
ELCA Global Links
Women of Bethlehem 2024
The Power of Prayer

