

# February 2023



**Bethlehem**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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



Website: [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org)  
Email: [bethlehem@bethlehemtc.org](mailto: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 Ed: 9:15-9:45am

Third Thursday Worship 7:00pm

Nursery open during worship service

## 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.”*

*"You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name."  
-John 15:16 (NRSV)*

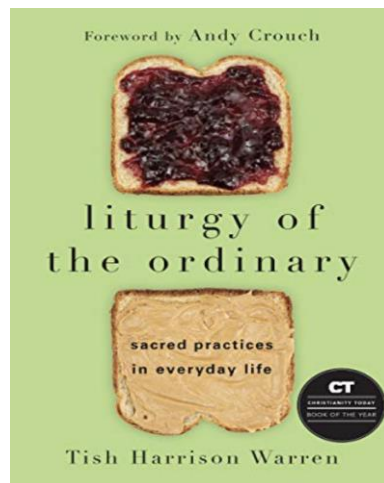


Dear Bethlehem brothers and sisters in Christ,

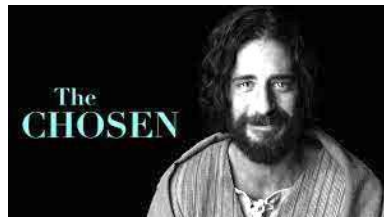
February is here, and the season of Lent is around the corner. In the same way that we look toward Advent with hope for Christ's birth, we look to Ash Wednesday (February 22<sup>nd</sup> worship at 7pm!) in anticipation of the reflective Lenten journey from Jesus' first days of ministry to the cross.

Lent "packs in" so much.

On one hand, **the season of Lent challenges us to examine our daily** (dare we say, ordinary?) **lives**. In that realm, I encourage you – if you haven't already – to check out our **Zoom Book and Bible Study as we read the book *Liturgy in the Ordinary* (2016)**. Tish Harrison Warren weaves our sacred elements of worship and faith through our daily rituals (eating, waking, etc). This coming week, we examine the relationships we share with close friends, and how that compares to the true meaning of the "Sign of the Peace" in worship. And if you've ever wondered how we might "bless and send" in both a worship service AND in our daily email practices, this may be the book for you!



But the season of **Lent also delves into the extra-ordinary moments in life**, as we reflect on why we are here and what Christ might truly be calling us to BE and DO in his name. The road to the cross was one of intense spirituality and physical tribulation BY Christ, but also FOR you and me. Understanding his sacrifice and our embodiment of His presence NOW might help to understand our mission today.



So I invite you to join me later in February, as we begin Lent with **a study of the Christian streaming/television series "Chosen"** and the **book of Romans in our Zoom Book and Bible series**.

**We also welcome our awesome new Ministry Coordinator, Alanna Stefunnick!** Stay tuned for more details and introductions soon. Peace and be well!

- Pr. Paul

### A Word from the President

Blessings to you all!

Here we are in February almost time for Ash Wednesday and the Lenten Season. The time of fasting and to reflect on Jesus time in the wilderness enduring the temptations of Satan. To look at the time of Jesus's prosecution and crucifixion. We as Christians take this time very seriously, often giving up a beloved item for 40 days. Please remember we are loved and Jesus died for our sins so we can be with him forever in Heaven. We look forward to celebrating his resurrection in the coming weeks.

Have a Blessed month!  
Gail



### **Two Wednesday Bible Studies:**

- **Adult Bible Study** gets together on Wednesdays from 9:30am-11:30am. It is a casual discussion of the Gospel of Luke. Bring your bibles and come, share, learn and grow with us.
  - **Zoom Bible Study**: meets on Wednesdays from 1:30pm—3:00pm. This group will study the book, *Liturgy in the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life*. Contact Pr Paul for Zoom information.
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### **Sunday Mornings:**

- **Sunday School**: 9:15am-9:45am
  - **Adult Education**: 9:15am-9:45am. Discussion will be about the Lessons/Gospel for the day
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**Choir announcement:** The choir will have a rehearsal on Feb 2nd at 7:00pm. Make a resolution to add some music into your life! Rehearsals are 2-3 Thursdays per month at 7:00. Contact Tony Bero at [bero.tony@gmail.com](mailto:bero.tony@gmail.com) or 942-1162.

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**New Members will be accepted on Sunday Feb 12.** Please join us in welcoming those who have been worshipping for us for some time and have made the decision to become a part of our BLC family. If you wanted to be a part of this group and have missed an invitation, please contact membership chair, Cindy Monroe at [cmonroe@chartermi.net](mailto:cmonroe@chartermi.net) or the office at 947-9880

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**Picture Directory:** We have a chance to make a new directory this year, but with any project like this we need volunteers. Please leave your name in the office if you can help on this project in any way.

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**Congratulations are in order for the gifted middle school student, Ava Zeratsky who blessed us with her talent on Reformation Sunday.** She auditioned and has been awarded a seat in the state middle school orchestra. If anyone wants to send her a note of congratulations Cindy Monroe can make certain that they are delivered to her.

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**UPDATE ON BABY PANTRY SUPPORT PROJECT:** Our Baby Pantry Food donations are down – like empty. These families are really appreciative of our help. Anything such as food items or toilet paper you can donate would be great. The basket is under the table in the coat closet. Thank you for sharing in your abundance. WELCA

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**A big thank you to all who have turned in Oleson's receipts.** We just received a check from them for \$186.58 for a grand total of \$651.20 for the year 2022. Please continue to drop off your Oleson's receipts at Bethlehem!!! Please note that they do not expire. Thank you so much!!!

### **Safety and Security of Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

Our Safety and Security Committee met on January 4th by Zoom. We had planned a meeting before the Council meeting to have an Officer from the Sheriff Department present to the council, BLC Staff, Property Committee, Safety and Security Committee and Volunteers for Worship Service. This presentation was going to be on Active Shooter Situations. Unfortunately the Office had to cancel last minute, but is hoping to present in February. After his presentation the Safety and Security Committee will have presentations with the Congregation. There will be discussions on what to do in this type of emergency as well fire drills and tornado drill. The lis to keep our congregation safe if anything should ever happen.

The committee will also be updating the Safety and Security policies so they will be correct and can be found easily.

We will be meeting again on February 1, 2023

God Bless You and Stay Safe in All You Do!

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### **SHEPHERDING A SABBATICAL**

The Sabbatical Team met in January to be ready for Pastor Paul's Sabbatical by the end of May. He will be on Sabbatical from May 29, through August 17, 2023.

The team has been working on this project for over a year. We started applying for the Lily Grant which we unfortunately did not receive. So many members of the congregation have donated funds for the Sabbatical.

Currently the Pulpit Supply part of the Sabbatical is about half complete. There have been so many people volunteer to share their experiences to preach and we have a number of pastors from the Synod and the community say they will step in. We may not have a pastor each week to allow us to have communion every week, but our plan would be to have it at least twice per month.

There have also been a number of people give suggestions for fun activities. The team is working on these activities also. Thank you for all of your input. We are looking forward to a nice Sabbatical for the Members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church as well as Pastor Paul.

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**Name tags:** Your name tags are back in your mailboxes. Please retrieve them so you can proudly wear them on Sunday mornings. We often have visitors and it helps them if they can see a friendly face and attach a name to it.

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**New Members:** Many of you have been visiting for some time and the start of the new year may be the time to make your presence here "Official". Feel free to contact membership chair, Cindy Monroe at [cmonroe@chartermi.net](mailto:cmonroe@chartermi.net) or the office at 947-9880

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**Monthly STAR** Thanks to all of you who have said that you will read the STAR on line or pick it up at church. Those of you who come to church, be thinking if there is any member close in your neighborhood that you could deliver their copy to them. If you have recently decided to read on line or pick-up at church please call the office and let them know.

### Kathi's Y2A Korner

Thank you, Sarah Denton, who shared with us the pressure we feel from our small group of kiddos. She presented some great ideas that we are going to try in the upcoming months.

Our next event will be the ski trip on Sunday, February 5 at Crystal Mountain, meeting there at 12:30 pm....skiing until 4:30 and then meeting for dinner at Gino's. It is very important to sign up for skiing. We will be paying for our Youth that have participated in fundraisers and as many adults as possible.

Lent nights will start on Thursday, March 2 with activities for the kiddos....will be making some crafts to give to our homebound folks.

We have decided on our first Family (Intergenerational night) on a Friday in March....date to be determined - hoping for the 10th???? We will be publishing this for the community to try to grow our Congregation, with priority on YOUTH.

Our Soup/Chili Cookoff is scheduled for Sunday, April 2 at 11:30 following service. Bring on your best recipes.....there will be recognition/prizes given.

In May, we are planning another Community/Intergenerational event....details to follow. Looking for ideas, but will be on a weekend....hoping for something outdoors.

VBS....we are still working on.....it will probably not be traditional at this point, but watch for updates. God bless you all for having your heart in the right place,

## Christian Education News February 2023



Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup> ski with us 12:30pm – 4:30pm  
followed by dinner  
Please see Christian Ed. for more details!

### Happy Valentine's Day!



*How great is the love  
the Father has lavished on us,  
that we should be called children of God!*  
1 John 3:1

-Christian Education Committee





## **FINANCIAL NEWS**

January income was \$40,220 compared to budgeted income of \$30,454 resulted in receiving \$9,766 more than budgeted.. Expenses were \$40,380 compared to budget of \$36,580 resulted in spending \$3,800 more than budgeted. On a cash basis expenses exceeded income by \$160.

For the year income was \$371,029 compared to budgeted income of \$359,427 resulted in receiving \$11,592 more than budgeted. Expenses were \$373,602 compared to budget of \$371,545 resulted in spending \$2,057 more than budgeted. On a cash basis, expenses have exceeded income by \$2,573.



**Bethlehem Docks at Safe Harbor!** Our days/nights start Saturday, 04FEB. **Those donating snack items – please deliver to Bethlehem kitchen clearly marked “SAFE HARBOR/XXFEB”.** I will assure they get to Safe Harbor. **If for Saturday, 4FEB-deliver by Thursday 02FEB; if for Sunday, 5FEB-deliver on that Sunday morning to church; if for Tuesday, 7FEB- deliver Monday or Tuesday AM to the church. Need special times? Call me and we’ll work it out.** We have jointly coordinated our meal plans so guests do not have the same meals day by day. I plan on being there each night to help where needed. Come join me! Tom Rockne, Bethlehem Lutheran Safe Harbor Coordinator M231.631.0040

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**BLC Book Club:** The BLC book club’s Feb meeting is on the 28th at 5:30 via ZOOM. The book is The Orphan’s Tale by Pam Jenoff. This book will NOT be in the outdoor box so you will need to find your own copy. If you are not on the email list and want to be involved send your information to cmonroe@chartermi.net.

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**Pecans Are Still Available:** The Worship and Music committee has a limited supply of Milk Chocolates and Mammoth Halves . They are good for a hostess gift, **Valentine’s Day**, baking or just plain munching. To order, please contact Barbara Oster at 231.668.7038 or beo6475@yahoo.com or call her at the BLC office (Monday, Tuesday or Thursday – 947.9880).

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**The synod assembly will be back in person this year instead of on-line. It will be held May 7-9 in Mt Pleasant.** Immanuel/Bethlehem choir director Tony Bero will be leading the music. Our church is allowed to send one male and one female as voting members in addition to our pastor. Perhaps this is the year that you feel you are being called to do something new and different in your spiritual life? If so please tell Pastor Paul or leave your name in the office.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

# ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.



Central Europe YAGM volunteers help lead worship.

**New YAGM country programs:** The YAGM team is excited to announce that the Mexico and Central Europe country programs are reopening in 2023. New volunteers will have the opportunity to serve in these programs as well as the four country programs that reopened in 2022: Argentina/Uruguay, Senegal, Jerusalem/West Bank and the United Kingdom. Note: BLC's former Youth Director, Alexis Steig was part of the volunteer team of Young Adults in Global Mission.

## WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM

FEBRUARY - 2023



**BABY PANTRY SUPPORT PROJECT:** We are continuing supporting the Baby Pantry here at Bethlehem with paper and cleaning products as well as packaged food items.

Items especially needed are laundry soap, toilet tissue, facial tissues, and other cleaning items.

Place items in baskets provided in the Narthex.

**The food pantry is empty!** Place food items in container provided in the coat room.

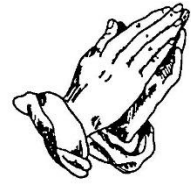
The Baby pantry is the second Thursday of the month so items are needed prior to that day.

Thank you for all you do for this needful project!

**FEBRUARY BIBLE STUDY:** Our Bible study is focusing on the Ten Commandments. In January we studied the first two commandments -putting God first in all things. In February we will study the 3rd and 4th commandments: Honoring the Sabbath Day and Honoring our Father and Mother. In our study we will find out how these commands offer a source of peace and inspiration in today's often hectic society and church.

**This month the circles are combining for one meeting on Thursday, February 9th at 1PM.** If interested in joining us, please contact Nancy Ammann 946-8433.

## Health Concerns\*



# The Power of Prayer

*Richard Fernholz, Nancy Smith, Tom & Lee Miller,  
Margie Whitney, Ellie Tacke, Rose Taylor,  
Julie Lapeer, Alvin Kober, Milt Bowes,  
Lynn Hoyt, Tom Woodworth,,  
Jan Waisanen, Molly Eastman, John Stretlien,  
Russ Luttinen, Sherry, Leroy Schlagel,  
Roy & Marilyn Dumond, Sean Rivard,  
Brenda Denoyer and the Denoyer Family,  
Patti McCracken, Sharon Vanmeter,  
Margaret Hutchison, Carol Collins,  
Patience Lambert, Dale Leider, Craig Bauer,  
Jennifer Mowers, Jan Schmid*

**French Manor South:** Brenda Denoyer      **Orchard Creek:** Jan Waisanen  
**Grand Traverse Pavilions:** Margie Whitney      **Boardman Lake Glens:** 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.

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### Prayer Requests:

- Prayer Chain:** Please contact Jan Stretlien at [jstretlien@gmail.com](mailto:jstretlien@gmail.com) or 231-947-3265
- Prayers read from the altar:** Please call the Administrative Assistant in the church office 231-947-9880

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Are you checking for the latest BLC updates at: [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org)?

You saw Norm and others take the photos...be sure you see them at [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org)!

Good News...and great news...at [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://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](http://bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes)**



# BLC Contacts

## PLEASE NOTE SEVERAL ADDRESS UPDATES

### Church Office

Pastor Paul Busekist	<a href="mailto:paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org">paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Admin. Asst. Barbara Oster	<a href="mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org">admin@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson	<a href="mailto:bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org">bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Tony Bero, Music Director	<a href="mailto:bero.tony@gmail.com">bero.tony@gmail.com</a>
Alanna Steffunick, Ministry Coordinator	<a href="mailto:alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org">alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.bethlehemtc.org">www.bethlehemtc.org</a>

### Church Council

Gail Goldsmith, President	<a href="mailto:president.council@bethlehemtc.org">president.council@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Maureen Bauer, Vice President	<a href="mailto:vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org">vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Jana Rockne, Secretary	<a href="mailto:secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org">secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Leonard Graf, Treasurer	<a href="mailto:treasurer.council@bethlehemtc.org">treasurer.council@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Jim Monroe, Financial Sec.	<a href="mailto:financialsecretary.council@bethlehemtc.org">financialsecretary.council@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Jim Hinds, Christian Care Giving	<a href="mailto:christiancaregiving.committee@bethlehemtc.org">christiancaregiving.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Paul Wiemerslage, Christian Ed.	<a href="mailto:christianeducation.committee@bethlehemtc.org">christianeducation.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Laura Hahn, Fellowship	<a href="mailto:fellowship.committee@bethlehemtc.org">fellowship.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Cindy Monroe, Membership/Evangelism	<a href="mailto:membershipevangelism.committee@bethlehemtc.org">membershipevangelism.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Chuck Ardingo, (not on Council), Property	<a href="mailto:property.committee@bethlehemtc.org">property.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Maureen Bauer, Personnel	<a href="mailto:personnel.committee@bethlehemtc.org">personnel.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Scott Farley, Stewardship	<a href="mailto:stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org">stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Denice Bossardet, Worship and Music	<a href="mailto:worshipmusic.committee@bethlehemtc.org">worshipmusic.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Paul Wiemerslage, Youth/Y2A	<a href="mailto:youth.committee@bethlehemtc.org">youth.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Pastor Paul Busekist	<a href="mailto:paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org">paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org</a>

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
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
Safe Harbor Tonight 10am - Worship Service(S) 11:15am - Worship and Music 12:30pm - Ski Trip	7pm - All Star DE	Bulletin articles due today Safe Harbor Tonight 9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 10am - Staff Meeting 7pm - All Star DE	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 11:30am - WELCA Board meeting 1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study 4:30pm - Safety and Security	5:30pm - ACA 7pm - Choir Rehearsal	12pm - XYZ Potluck 8pm - Faith & Family - FH	Safe Harbor Tonight
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10am - Traditional Worship 12:30pm - Confirmation Class	11am - Piano Tuning - Aaron S. 1pm - Finance Cmte.(CR) 7pm - All Star DE	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 12pm - Sarah Circle - FH 1pm - Friendship Bible Study 6pm - Y2A/Christian Ed Meeting 6:30pm - Executive Cmte.(CR) 7pm - All Star DE	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study 7pm - All Star DE	9am - Baby Pantry Setup 10am - Baby Pantry-FH 1pm - Rebecca Anna Circle - GS 5:30pm - ACA 7pm - All Star DE 7pm - Choir Rehearsal	STAR articles due today 10am - Sew Pieciful	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10am - Worship Service(S) 12:30pm - Confirmation Class	5pm - All Star DE	Bulletin articles due today Shrove Tuesday 9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 5pm - All Star DE 6:30pm - Council Meeting 7pm - Lutheran SG @ at the home	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1pm - Johnson SG (Offsite) 5pm - All Star DE 7pm - Ash Wednesday Service	5:30pm - ACA 7pm - All Star DE 7pm - Choir Rehearsal		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
		Bulletin articles due today				
10am - Worship Service(S)						
12:30pm - Confirmation Class						
26	27	28	1	2	3	4
10am - Worship Service(S)		Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 5:30pm - Book/Supper Club (O) 6:30pm - Newcomers				



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Levon M. Seavolt, Owner/Manager



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Monthly donation: 1/16 page \$25; 1/8 \$50; 1/4 \$80. Pay for a year in full---get 1 Month Free Questions??? Please contact Scott Farley 231-920-8333 or [swfarley@charter.net](mailto:swfarley@charter.net) Make checks payable to BLC...put "Star Ad" on envelope.



## BLC MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND

# We're Making A Difference!

During 2021, the BLC Mission Endowment Fund Committee has worked hard to follow its mission of funding projects on a local and global level. Using only profits on our investments, more than \$18,000 was disbursed to many organizations in support of our mission, including:

<b>Love Thy Neighbor</b>	<b>Keys to Freedom</b>
<b>Safe Harbor</b>	<b>Habitat for Humanity</b>
<b>Lutheran Immigrant &amp; Refugee Services</b>	<b>Generations Ahead</b>
<b>ELCA World Hunger</b>	<b>Food Rescue of NW Michigan</b>
<b>ELCA Disaster Relief</b>	<b>Womens Resource Center</b>
<b>Meals on Wheels</b>	<b>Salvation Army</b>
<b>Father Fred Foundation</b>	<b>GT Conservation District</b>
<b>Boardman River Clean Sweep</b>	<b>Freedom Builders</b>
<b>NW Michigan Supportive Housing</b>	

In comparison, 5 years ago we granted out about \$6000. Our Vanguard funds are serving us well and continue to grow! PLEASE consider recognizing the **BLC Mission Endowment Fund** in your personal **Estate Plans or Year-End Giving!**

If you would like to serve on this incredible committee, or have further questions about giving, please contact any of the current members:

Neal Kibby Dave Peppler Barb Wright Patti Friedli Chuck Ardingo