

# March 2022



Bethlehem  
LUTHERAN CHURCH



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 during worship service

Nursery open during worship service

Parking Lot Communion: 11:00 am

## 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.”*



***"I lift up my eyes to the hills,  
from where will my help come?"***  
– Psalm 121, v. 1 (NRSV)



## **Days in the Desert...**

For each of the past few years I have made it a point to watch the 2015 Rodrigo Garcia film *Last Days in the Desert* before the season of Lent begins. It's a wonderful movie about Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness following his baptism and before he re-enters the "real world" to begin his formal ministry. How often do we think of those 40 days of Christ? Do they seem more like days of sabbath or days of trial and temptation? Scripture says very little about those 40 days. We know that angels cared for Jesus. We know that Satan tested his resolve, faith and loyalty... But without a creative interpretation like Garcia's to fill in the blanks, we might simply gloss over those 40 days as being just like any other. In the movie, Jesus meets a family high in the hills of desert country. The family consists of three characters who are "anonymous" – biblically and literally (none of whom have names), yet what they learn from one another and Jesus is profound. What Jesus takes away from his own experience, too, is worth the watch.

**What will these next 40 days be like for us?** Will they be a times of sabbath and rest, or days where we feel our sense of resolve and faith challenged? Will they be a time for us to "gear up" as Jesus did before starting a whole new chapter and ministry in our lives, or will they be a way to take stock in the blessings that we have? Perhaps it will be all of those things and more for you. But as we walk this journey together, I invite you to join me as we take an eclectic walk through Lenten Wednesdays (and Sundays) together.

We will start Lent with **Ash Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm** in the sanctuary – both in-person and via livestream for those at home. Each Wednesday evening thereafter, we will gather at Bethlehem at 6pm for what we're calling **"Simple Soup at Six"** – with other sides like salad and bread. At 6:30 we will gather in the sanctuary for a brief worship with the music from Holden Evening Prayer, Taize, and other selections. Our theme this year is **"The Message and the Messenger,"** as we compare the "who" of the Christ to the "what and how" of the message God sends to us this Lent. We will read side-by-side the NRSV version of the Lenten bible texts and Eugene Peterson's *The Message* translation. And we will pay special note to this question: "Who and what is this Message who is also the Messenger for us?"

On a personal note, I wanted to say a deep and heartfelt thank you to all those who are helping put together a pastoral sabbatical in 2023. Many, many thanks - to them and you – for all your support and mutual ministry.

I leave you with the continuation from the verse above. "I lift my eyes from the hills, from where will my help come...?" The desert answers: "My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

See you soon, and God bless.

-Pr. Paul

## A word from the President...

Ash Wednesday this year for me is late. This also means that Easter will be farther into April and maybe with some early flowers popping up from a sunny spot in the ground. I always get confused when Easter comes. (There is also a full moon involved!) It is 40 days after Ash Wednesday but you don't count the Sundays. Otherwise it will be 46 days. My former Pastor would say that the Sundays are "in Lent but not of Lent". The 40 days, of course, is the 40 days and 40 nights that Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness.

It almost seems that we all have been wandering in the wilderness for the last two years. We all have made sacrifices and gave things up that we enjoy for this time period and not just for 40 days. As we move forward out of the wilderness and look around let's be thankful for what we see.

One thing that I am thankful for going into this year and next is the opportunity for Pastor Paul and Bethlehem to participate in a sabbatical process. Stay tuned as this moves forward with updates in the Star and other communications.

Mark McPherson

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## FINANCIAL NEWS

January income was \$25,298 compared to a budgeted income of \$30,123 or a shortfall of \$4,825. Expenses were \$32,218 compared to a budget of \$31,334 resulting in spending \$794 more than budgeted. On a cash basis, expenses exceeded income by \$5,830.

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### BLC LEGACY GIVING COMMUNITY Easy Ways to Leave a Legacy

Bethlehem Lutheran is starting a new ministry that makes it easy for members to leave a meaningful legacy to the Church.

Throughout our lives, we reflect on what we have achieved and what we hope to accomplish – in a way that exemplifies our values and beliefs. With your generous support of Bethlehem, you can express your values while balancing your own financial needs.

Naming Bethlehem Lutheran Church through a bequest in your will or trust, or by beneficiary designation, costs you little or nothing. With most gifts, you can change your mind at any time and you are not locked into a decision you make today. There is no minimum gift required. Every gift makes a difference and your gift ensures your legacy lasts for years to come.

If you are interested in learning more about BLC Legacy Giving Community, please contact Karen Feahr at [karenfeahr@aol.com](mailto:karenfeahr@aol.com).

## Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Traverse City Michigan

"We journey with God to serve with love"

**MINUTES TO CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:** January 18, 2022

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mark McPherson, President called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**OPENING PRAYER:** Jim Hinds read a poem, "Endeavor To Persevere" by George Wootton, Hebrews 12 and prayed.

**ROLL CALL:** Gail Goldsmith, Secretary; Maureen Bauer, Pastor Paul Busekist, Scott Farley, Leonard Graf, Jim Hinds, Mark McPherson, Cindy Monroe, Jim Monroe, Paul Wiemerslage were all present. Denice Bossardet, Laura Hahn and Gail Goldsmith were present through Zoom.

**VISITOR/S OR CONGREGATIONAL COMMENT:** no visitors

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Cindy Monroe made the motion to approve the agenda, Maureen Bauer seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM:** Maureen made the motion to approve the December 21, 2022 minutes, Cindy Monroe seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

### REPORTS:

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Mark McPherson made a personal reflection.

**PASTOR'S REPORT:** Pastor Paul reports January is a month for new beginnings. He is trying out a few challenges for himself as a person and a pastor.

His focus at BLC this coming month is 3-fold: 1. Working to get back to live stream and a solid sound system in the sanctuary for live worship, 2. Preparing a more relational ministry in the year 2022 and 3. Working with the council to "plan to get a plan" for visioning work at Bethlehem either late spring or early fall.

1. Pastor has been working with 3 vendors for the sound system and presented their invoices to the council.
2. Pastor is working on a more relational ministry for more personal and less structured commitments. These will unfold organically. He is planning some Continuing Education time at the end of the month to work on some leadership development and spiritual direction. Ruth Overdier will preach and preside on January 30, 2022.
3. To bring more effort to get more intentional about our visioning focus at BLC. This will need the help of the Council and a visioning task force at some point

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Leonard Graf reported; December expenses exceeded income by \$10,570. Due to 2 light bills being paid in December as it was not paid in November, there were 3 pay periods in December and the Property Committee replaced some lights. For the 2021 year expenses were over income by \$7341. The PPP loan was not included in these figures. With the PPP loan the income was \$19,000 over expenses for the year.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Jim Monroe reports December income is \$1834 under the amount needed for the monthly budget. Year to Date contributions through December are \$22,455 under budget. The expenses with the PPP loan, we came out ok. There is money in the checking account for 2022, with the reduction in the budget and the forecasted amount of giving.

COVID update: As of last Thursday Grand Traverse County was at 22 ½% rolling average. It is important the church continue to have everyone wear masks over their nose and mouth. Munson continues to report they are short staffed and report their staff is at 99% compliance.

**CONSENT CALENDAR: COMMITTEE REPORTS:** The committee reports are; Treasurer's report; Financial Secretary's report; Financial and Executive Committee report; Christian Care; Fellowship; Membership and Evangelism; Personnel; Property; Stewardship; Worship and Music; Youth/Y2A; All reports are submitted and on file.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. **Personnel, Sick Leave Policy:** Maureen Bauer presented the new Sick Leave for Non-Rostered (At Will) Employees policy. Full time staff will accrue sick leave at a rate of one-half day per month worked. Part-time employees, those under 32 hours, may accrue paid sick leave at a rate of one hour every 30 hours worked. Sick leave begins to accrue from the first day of employment. Additionally, sick leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of 40 hours. Staff members who accumulate benefit allowed will not earn additional sick leave.

Unused sick pay benefits may not be used for personal time off or as additional vacation, and staff members will not be paid unused sick leave upon termination of employment. Sick leave will to be considered as hours worked for the calculation of overtime. The Church reserves the right to request written physicians excuse for any sick leave used by an employee.

Leonard Graf made the motion to accept the Sick Leave Policy, Scott Farley seconded they motion. The motion carried.

- B. **Y2A/Christian Education update:** Paul Wiemerslage reports Y2A and Christian Education are continuing to meet together. Due to COVID the pancake breakfast is canceled, they ski trip is changed to 2-26-22 at Chrystal Mountain for 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Youth Gathering Registration is on hold for now. Christian Education guideline to be pursued and to look closely at the policy for Children to adult ratio and background checks. They are looking at possibly having an Easter breakfast this year.
- C. **Music Director Position:** Cindy Monroe made the motion to hire Tony Bero as the part time Choir Director/Music Supervisor for BLC. Maureen seconded the motion, the motion carried. Discussion: Tony is the Music Director of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Suttons Bay and is willing to work with BLC Choir and help Cindy and Kate organize the music for Sunday morning worship. Since he is directing on Sundays at Immanuel he will not be present on Sundays at BLC, but can be present for rehearsals and special concerts on other days of the week. He is compensated according to his Employment agreement.
- D. **Refresh Committee:** No report at this time
- E. **Sabbatical Committee Update:** Gail Goldsmith made the motion to approve a 12 week Sabbatical for Pastor Paul Busekist in 2023. Maureen Bauer seconded the motion, the motion carried.
- F. **Sabbatical Funding:** Gail Goldsmith made the motion for BLC to make an application to the Lilly Endowment for a Grant for the purpose of funding the costs for Pastor Paul's Sabbatical. Cindy Monroe seconded the motion, the motion carried. Discussion: There is a committee meeting currently to help Pastor plan the Sabbatical and to apply for they grant money. There will be communication to the congregation in the "Bethlehem Star" and at the Congregational meetings. There will also be plans in place if the grant is not received as there is only a 50/50 chance the grant application will be accepted.

- G. Sound System:** Paul Wiemerslage made the motion to allow the President or Vice President of BLC Council to authorize expenditures up to \$13,000 for critical sound equipment replacement. Jim Hinds seconded the motion, the motion carried. Discussion: Pastor Paul Busekist reported on the situation with the sound system. He has received quotes from 3 vendors and is negotiating rental equipment as it may take months to have the equipment installed due to supply chain issues.

Amendment to motion: An amendment was made to the motion by Leonard Graf for the funds to come from a combination of Asset Replacement Funds from the Sustaining Endowment Funds, Cash Reserves, or other sources. Cindy Monroe seconded the amendment, the amendment carried. Discussion: to have a Temple Talk to see if there are interested parties to donate to the sound system.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Property Committee/Lease Renewal on the rental house:** Leonard Graf made the motion to continue to lease the home at 1020 Peninsula Dr. for 1 year. Cindy Monroe seconded the motion, the motion carried. Discussion was at some point the Church may consider selling the home to pay off the church mortgage and provide updates to the church. Scott Farley agreed to make an analysis on the home to see what the home is worth and to form an Ad Hoc committee to make the best plan for the home and the church. In the meantime, there are good tenants in the home and the bills are being paid. The church is providing a good home for a reasonable price.
- B. Use of Fellowship Hall for WELCA:** WELCA's use of the Fellowship Hall does not need to come to the Council for approval, but they need to follow COVID mask protocol while in the church.

#### **VISITOR OR CONGREGATIONAL COMMENTS: NA**

**GOOD TO THE ORDER:** A time for general/undocumented comments by each Council Member, if so desired.

**LORD'S PRAYER:** said by all

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

Gail Goldsmith,

Council Secretary

## **Giving Statements Available**

Your individual giving statements are will be available in your mailbox in the Narthex beginning Sunday January 30, 2022. The statement covers giving from January through December 2021. Please pick them up at your convenience. To save on postage, I will mail out the ones not picked up by the end of March 2022. Thank you for your generous support for the programs and ministries of your church especially during these uncertain times.

Your Bookkeeper



## SHEPHERDING A SABBATICAL-PART 2

**What?.... a sabbatical?** It is exciting and scary all at the same time!!! This congregation will be without its regular leader for 12 weeks. This is a chance for Pastor Paul to be nurtured and grow and to bring that growth back to us. However, it is also a time when each of us can experience our own spiritual, emotional, and mental growth at the same time. That is the challenge before all of us.

**Why a Sabbatical now?** The better question may be, why NOT now? Our intrepid leader of personnel has been doing everything possible to work on staff contentment and retention. In this time of “great resignation” we want to keep the people who are working hard for us. One way we know we can do this is to follow the teachings of scripture which were shared in the previous STAR article and provide that important time of rest. A pastor is actually on duty 24/7 to tend to his flock. That’s a big burden for both a pastor and his family to carry. The only way to maintain the endurance and stamina is to take adequate time away from all of the cares and needs of others and come back rejuvenated.

**Will it be expensive?** Right now the “Shepherds” of the sabbatical (Sabbatical Committee) are working very hard on the application to the Lilly Foundation so that the cost will be nothing. So, please take time now and pray for our success in writing this grant. Even if we do not receive this grant we have committed to having Pastor Paul take his sabbatical in the summer of 2023. Some dreams may have to be pared back, and there may be a request for more volunteers from the congregation. It is possible, however, to have this sabbatical occur without making the congregation feel financially overwhelmed.

**How will Bethlehem benefit?** BLC will benefit from having a pastor who is “in tune” with himself, nature, God, family, and this congregation. He will be in a better position to envision the future of BLC. It is so telling that the grant application repeatedly asks the pastor, “What will make your heart sing?” We have a very “musical” pastor, but is his heart really singing now so that he can share the joy of faith and grace with all of us?

**Is there something I should be doing now?** As mentioned above, you can already be praying for the success of the committee in completing their Lilly application. You can also be thinking of questions you may have for **the Sabbatical forum which will occur during the service on March 20, 2022.** Instead of a sermon, we will have an open discussion about the sabbatical to hear your questions, concerns, ideas, etc. It will be a time to brainstorm for the time of the Sabbatical and the future of BLC. If we don’t finish, those who would like can stay after the service to share more.

**What can I do to help during the Sabbatical?** There may be many more ideas that occur after the March 20 meeting, but some immediate thoughts are: PRAY, increase your volunteering beyond your comfort zone to be a: greeter, usher, lay reader, lay assistant, committee member, money counter, AV helper, prayer chain member...Could you even give a sermon!?!? If the hospital allows, you could visit the ill or assist the flower brigade with their weekly visitation and dispersal of flowers. You can help with planning a wonderful party for Pastor Paul’s return complete with an “official” (or unofficial) Pastor Paul Parody led by the choir but with all chiming in on the chorus. The sky is the limit.

If you cannot be present on March 20, but want to share some thoughts, please be sure to relay them to Carolyn Mann, Gail Goldsmith, Barbara Wright, Maureen Bauer, or Cindy Monroe. Hope to hear from as many of you as possible.



The choir hopes to continue singing one time per month on weekends when the majority of singers are in town. If you are interested please contact Tony Bero at 231 942-1162 or [bero.tony@gmail.com](mailto:bero.tony@gmail.com)

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## **LAUNDRY BASKET PROJECT**

**FOR 2022:** We are collecting cleaning items to be given out during the Baby Pantry here at Bethlehem. There is an example basket in the Narthex along with a list of items needed. You may fill an entire basket OR bring single items if you prefer. We would like to have baskets available beginning in March. Thank you for your participation!



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**Lent Update:** As Covid numbers seem now to be heading in an encouraging direction, we hope to ease back into Fellowship supper gatherings this Lenten season. For March 9, 16, 23, 30 and April 6th, we are planning to have a "simple soup and bread\*" dinner in the Fellowship Hall, followed by worship at 6:30. Our 1st Communion students will have class before dinner. Here's our schedule for each night:

**5:30pm - 1st Communion Class in the Youth Room** (others welcome to socialize in the Gathering Space)

**6:00pm - "A Simple Soup\* at Six"**

**6:30pm - Brief Worship** (Holden Evening Prayer, Taize, or Scripture with Songs and short message for approximately 30 minutes)

**\*Our soup each night will be served also with bread, a veggie tray, dessert, coffee and punch.**

Our Lenten theme this year is "The Message and the Messenger" and will focus during the worship message on an eclectic mix of biblical and modern messengers of the gospel. We hope to see you then!



## Bethlehem's Safe Harbor Ministry for 2022

A cadre of enthusiastic volunteers, charged with Christ's message to love and serve our neighbors, supported our ministry to persons experiencing homelessness during our period of Safe Harbor service, February 5-9. 60 to 70 men and women guests each night were given a hot evening meal and a safe place to sleep at the Safe Harbor Emergency Housing Shelter on Wellington Street. Through their gift of service BLC volunteers acted as the hands, feet, and soul of Jesus. And there is a return gift to us: the gift of recognition that the Safe Harbor guests are our neighbors worthy of support, encouragement, and love, rather than persons to be avoided and rendered invisible.

To all our volunteers we say thank you! Tina Dohm, Cindy Monroe, and BJ Christensen served as kitchen leaders with the help of the following in the kitchen crews: Betty Rutila, Carl & Suzanne Lehto, Cheryl Wegener, Cindy & Jim Monroe, Jim Hinds, Karen Elkins, Kate Holtfreter, Renae Wells, Shannon Nemeth, Matt & Quentin Branch, Tom Christensen, Laura & Dan Hahn, Jim Hutchison, Martha Junkin. Evening Volunteers were Tom Rockne and John Halstead. The following donated snacks: Sue Allen, Patty Leibenguth, Deb Hissong, Carolyn Mann, Gail Goldsmith, Mary Ann Tanis.

Financial grants from the BLC Mission Endowment Fund and Thrivent Financial for food purchases were essential components of this ministry.

This was the thirteenth year of our BLC Safe Harbor ministry and was the fifth year of service at the shelter building. For five prior years we housed guests at our church where they slept on the floor in Fellowship Hall, and for three years earlier we volunteered to support other congregations that housed guests in their own church building.

Thanks to the many BLC volunteers who served a meal or provided the oodles of evening snacks for the Safe Harbor guests. Special thanks to future new member Sue Allen (on the left) who with her neighbor Cindy had their own personal Bake-a-thon to make dozens of cookies and bagged them as individual treats. All of the "cookie monsters" were overjoyed!



## ABRIDGED WITH ANNIE: A SUMMARY OF YOUTH EVENTS FOR MARCH...

I can't believe it's already March and the Lenten Season can you?! Lots going on this season as well—buckle up!

### MARCH HAPPENINGS ...

**Confirmation Classes** are taking a break during the Lenten Season. We will resume classes on **Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>** here at Bethlehem and led by me. Our other classes in May will be **Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>** led by Pastor Carolyn and **Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>** led by Pastor Paul.



Our **Youth Groups** will be taking a break during Lent, however I am offering **One on Ones** for all the Youth during the season of Lent. Reach out to me if you would like to schedule a one on one!

**Although we were originally planning on attending CHARGE this month, the event was postponed to November due to Covid concerns.** If you have any questions about registration or anything in regards to this please reach out to me.

**Stony Lake Camp Registration is open and free to all young campers interested!** We have good news! The deadline has been extended and there is still room! Please register online as soon as possible and let me know! **The week we will have Bethlehem Adult Leaders is Week 1 (June 19 – 24) so make sure you register for that week!** Reach out to me with any questions.

**Lenten Services** will be on **Wednesdays** this month beginning on Ash Wednesday (March 2<sup>nd</sup>) and ending Holy Week (the week of April 10<sup>th</sup>)! We will have craft activities for the youth ready during our time together and we invite you to join us for that as well as worship. All are welcome.

I'm hoping to release some information about **VBS** soon and as early as this month! Our first step will be finding enough volunteers in order to make it happen. Keep your eyes and ears peeled for that information.

Be sure to mark your calendars for all these fun events!

As we begin this Holy Lenten Season, I ask that you keep Bethlehem's youth and their families in your prayers as they go about their days. Staying healthy and always keeping Christ in their hearts.

Cheerfully in Christ,

*Annie Slabaugh*

Director of Youth and Outreach, Bethlehem Lutheran Church – Traverse City

## **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.

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### **Due Dates for STAR/Bulletin/Screen Announcements:**

**STAR:** The third Friday of the month sent to [admin@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org) (Please note STAR in subject line)

**Bulletin/Verbal Announcements:** Wednesday of the week sent to [admin@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org) (Bulletin/Worship Folder is printed on Thursday morning.) (Please note Bulletin or Announcement in subject line)

**Screen Announcements/Weekly BLC Emails:** Tuesday of the week sent to [annie.slabaugh@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:annie.slabaugh@bethlehemtc.org) (Annie works Sunday – Wednesday)

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**Food Pantry News:** The outdoor food pantry is closed until spring to make sure that none of the food is damaged by the cold. You can still bring in your staples at any time and place it in the teal bin under the table by the mailboxes. One BLC member knew of an apartment complex for low income residents with food needs and delivered 12 overflowing bags of what had been outside to the very grateful recipients. Please keep the residents of the 72 unit Brookside Commons Apartments in your prayers. Watch for the pantry to jump back into full swing in the spring.

## **Book Club:**

The book for the Mar. 22 book club meeting at 5:30 on ZOOM is The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood. I am assured that it is different from the TV show if you have watched that. I think it is going to take many of us out of our "comfort zone". Books from the library are in the plastic bin outside of church. Be sure to sign your name on the sheet next to the number that matches the number on your book. Below is a description of the book:

"Set in the near future, it describes life in what was once the United States, now called the Republic of Gilead, a monotheocracy that has reacted to social unrest and a sharply declining birthrate by reverting to, and going beyond, the repressive intolerance of the original Puritans. The regime takes the Book of Genesis absolutely at its word, with bizarre consequences for the women and men of its population"—

If you are not already on the email list and would like to join the discussion **please send your email to Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net.Book Club..**

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The 2022 Giving envelopes are available in the Narthex. Please pick up at earliest convenience so that we do not have to mail them to you.

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**There are two Bible studies on Wednesdays –**  
**9:00am-11:00am in BLC Youth Room** – studying the Gospel of Matthew – Barbara Graf is the leader

**1:30pm-3:00pm by Zoom** – studying "Home by Another Way" by Barbara Brown Taylor. . It contains sermons that walk us through the church year. The book can be ordered through Amazon - if necessary, Barbara Oster can help with ordering. Please contact Pr. Paul if you are interested in joining.

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**Stony Lake Camp Registration is open and free to all young campers interested!** The deadline has been extended indefinitely and there is still room! Please register online as soon as possible and let Annie know! The week Bethlehem Adult Leaders will be there is Week 1 (June 19 – 24) so make sure you register for that week! Reach out to Annie either after worship or at annie.slabaugh@bethlehemtc.org with any questions or concerns.

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**Please continue to turn in your Olesons' receipts to Bethlehem. Thanks for your support.**



# Christian Education News

## March 2022



### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IS COMING!!!

The Christian Education Committee is beginning to plan for VBS this summer!

Watch upcoming STAR issues for more details on how you can be involved!



Sunday School has resumed classes for our children during the worship service, but we need help to continue this important ministry for our littlest members! Lessons are easy to implement with very simple scripts, and the time commitment can be as little as just once a month! Do you hear the voice of Jesus calling you to serve? Please prayerfully consider this opportunity, and contact the Christian Education Committee for more information.



### Have a Blessed Lenten Season!



-Christian Education Committee



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

# ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.



## **A Reflection from the Rev. Rachel Eskesen, Director, ELCA Europe Desk**

I was first invited to serve internationally with the ELCA as a Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) volunteer at St. Andrew's Refugee Ministries (now St. Andrew's Refugee Services, or StARS) in Cairo, Egypt, in 2004. When I responded "YES!" to this call to serve, I couldn't have imagined how the experience would continue to impact and inform my vocational discernment.

Years later, during seminary, I felt a continuous pull toward global ministry and explored it further as an ELCA Horizon International intern in Bratislava, Slovakia. After graduating from seminary, I returned to the ELCA's global ministries when I accepted a call to serve, first in an interim and then in a permanent capacity, as YAGM Central Europe Country coordinator.

Two years have passed since I began serving as area desk director for Europe on Feb. 1, 2020. Thus far my entire tenure has unfolded amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Now more than ever, we are called to courageous vulnerability in life. I'm grateful for the ministry partners who've joined us in our collaborative attempt to live fully into God's mission in our world.

**We can help support 240 ELCA missionaries serving across the world through our prayers, support and gifts. For more information visit: [www.elca.org/globalmission](http://www.elca.org/globalmission).**



**WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM -- FEBRUARY, 2022**



**HELLO, MARCH!** May you be filled with warmth, love and kindness.  
May you bring on an abundance of everything our hearts desire. And  
may you fill our days with the beauty of a smile and the touch of a caring  
heart. *written by Rebecca Fox*



**BIBLE STUDY FOR MARCH:** We are taking our lesson from the *Gather Magazine*.  
March will cover 'Eternal life in the Gospel of John', how Jesus used the expression  
'eternal life' to talk about the 'kingdom of God' and how our lives can be marked by  
love and purpose. If you are interested in joining us, please contact  
Nancy Ammann 946-8433.



**DONATIONS FROM WELCA:** During 2021 we made donations to the following  
projects: ELCA Good Gifts, Traverse Health Clinic, Leelanau Christian Neighbors,  
Lutheran World Relief, and Bethlehem Lutheran for the purchase of tables for the  
Fellowship Hall. We also send 50% of our monthly offerings to support the  
ministries of the Women of the ELCA.



**LAUNDRY BASKET PROJECT FOR 2022:** We have a new project for the coming  
year: filling laundry baskets to be utilized by the Baby Pantry here at Bethlehem.  
Check out the sample basket in the Narthex and also pick up a list of items needed.  
Baskets can be filled with items from the Dollar Store which will total \$15.00 plus tax.  
Items needed are: One Laundry Basket, Softener or dryer sheets, Liquid laundry  
detergent, Disinfectant wipes &/or spray, Microfiber cleaning cloths, All-purpose  
cleaner, Bleach, Toilet paper, Tissues, Hand soap, and Rubber gloves. We would  
like to be able to begin having baskets available by the March 10th Baby Pantry.  
Thank you for your participation!

**7 PRAYERS FOR MARCH:** May March bring healings, blessings and miracles. May your  
health improve. May your pain be less. May your plans work out. May your finances  
multiply. May you live long. May your worries disappear.

## Health Concerns\*



# The Power of Prayer

*Richard Fernholz, Nancy Smith, Tom & Lee Miller,  
Margie Whitney, Ellie Tacke, Rose Taylor,  
Priscilla Thompson, Julie LaPeer, Dirk,  
Alvin Kober, Lynn Hoyt, Tom Woodworth,  
Jan Waisanen, Molly Eastman, John Stretlien,  
Russ Luttinen, Sherry, Leroy Schlagel,  
Roy & Marilyn Dumond, Sean Rivard, Brenda Denoyer,  
Patti McCracken, Jeffrey Henschell,  
Sharon Vanmeter, Margaret Hutchinson,  
Diane Hoffman, Carol Collins, Patience Lambert*

**Traverse Manor:** Margie Whitney

**Boardman Lake Glens:** Inge Thomas, Bill & Dee Springer

**Samaritas (Acme):** Priscilla Thompson

**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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**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.com](mailto:jstretlien@gmail.com)**

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\*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: [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)...

# 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. Rebecca Eaton	<a href="mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org">admin@bethlehemtc.org</a>
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, Music Director	
Annie Slabaugh, Youth & Outreach Director	<a href="mailto:annie.slabaugh@bethlehemtc.org">annie.slabaugh@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.bethlehemtc.org">www.bethlehemtc.org</a>

### Church Council

Mark McPherson, 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>
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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).





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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	1	2	3	4	5
10am - Worship Service(S) 11am - Parking Lot 11:15am - Worship and	4pm - Drive My Way 6pm - Drive My Way (FH)	Shrove Tuesday 9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 10am - Staff Meeting(CR)	Bulletin articles due today 9am - Bible Study(YR) 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1:30pm - ZOOM Bible Study 7pm - Ash Wednesday	5:30pm - ACOA 7pm - Choir Rehearsal	5pm - Drive My Way (FH) 9am - All-Star DE (FH)	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10am - Worship Service(S) 11am - Parking Lot 11:15am - Worship and	4pm - Drive My Way 6pm - Drive My Way (FH)	9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 10am - Staff Meeting(CR) 12pm - Sarah Circle - FH 1pm - Friendship Bible 4pm - Drive My Way 4:30pm - Executive Comte. 6pm - Drive My Way (FH)	Bulletin articles due today 9am - Bible Study(YR) 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1:30pm - ZOOM Bible Study 4pm - Drive My Way 5:30pm - 1st Communion 6pm - A Simple Soup 6:30pm - Lenten service	9am - Baby Pantry 1pm - Rebecca Anna Circle 4pm - Drive My Way 5:30pm - ACOA 6pm - Drive My Way (FH) 7pm - Choir Rehearsal	5pm - Faith & Family -FH	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
10am - Worship Service(S) 11am - Parking Lot	4pm - Drive My Way 5pm - Finance Cmte.(CR)	9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 10am - Staff Meeting(CR) 4pm - Drive My Way 6pm - Council Meeting 7pm - Lautner SG @ the	Bulletin articles due today 9am - Bible Study(YR) 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1:30pm - ZOOM Bible Study 4pm - Drive My Way 5:30pm - 1st Communion 6pm - A Simple Soup 6:30pm - Lenten service	4pm - Drive My Way 5:30pm - ACOA 7pm - Choir Rehearsal	STAR articles due today 10am - Sew Pieciful	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
10am - Worship Service(S) 11am - Parking Lot	4pm - Drive My Way	9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 10am - Staff Meeting(CR) 4pm - Drive My Way 5:30pm - Book/Supper Club 6:30pm - Newcomers	Bulletin articles due today 9am - Bible Study(YR) 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1pm - Johnson SG (Offsite) 1:30pm - ZOOM Bible Study 4pm - Drive My Way 5:30pm - 1st Communion 6pm - A Simple Soup	4pm - Drive My Way 5:30pm - ACOA		9am - All-Star DE
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
10am - Worship Service(S) 11am - Parking Lot		9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 10am - Staff Meeting(CR)	Bulletin articles due today 9am - Bible Study(YR) 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1:30pm - ZOOM Bible Study 5:30pm - 1st Communion 6pm - A Simple Soup 6:30pm - Lenten service	5:30pm - ACOA		

Whether in-person or online,  
*You are always WELCOME at Bethlehem!!!😊*

*Shalom, and do not be afraid.*



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