# SEPTEMBER 2020



Traverse City, MI 49686 (231) 947-9880

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

Building Hours: (Currently closed due to Covid 19)

Monday – Thursday, 9am to 3pm

Office Hours: (Currently closed due to Covid 19)

Monday – Thursday, 9am to 3pm



<u>Worship Times:</u> (In-person worship currently postponed; offering "virtual worship" due to Covid-19)

Saturday: Sunday: 5 pm Celebrate! Worship 8:30 an Dactional Worship 9:45 an Putaton Hour 11 am Modern Worship

Communion at all services

# Follow the STAR to Bethlehem!

Our Mission...

"We journey with God, to serve with love"

## Our Vision...

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



"Do not be afraid, I am with you, I have called you each by name Come and follow Me, I will bring you home..." – ELW 581. You Are Mine



Dear Bethlehem friends,

First, I hope that you all are well, and that you take a moment to check out one of our new online "2.0" worship services, typically "aired" on Wednesday nights, but archived and available always on Facebook or our Real Church Virtual page on Youtube. We have Taize services and one version of Holden Evening Prayer (and soon a **NEW version of Holden** as well!) By the beginning of October, we hope to have a regular online rotation of Taize, two Holden versions, and "virtual hymn/song sings" to help us blend music, scripture and faithful reflection with familiar faces and images from Bethlehem – from home and church alike!

Second, a letter will go out to you all this month to address how we will move forward. Though the date is not official, *our "New Normal Task Force" has recommended that we make our last outdoor worship service the same day as our annual "Blessing of the Animals" (also outside, directly following worship this year) on Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. That would make our target date to re-enter the building for worship Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>. In the meantime, the task force and Council are working to establish guidelines and preparations to hopefully open our doors once again. But please note: worship will look different, and precautions (like refraining from singing, to stem the spread of virus particles) will likely be in effect indoors for the foreseeable future. More to come. Shalom, stay strong, and thanks always for your prayers and patience.* 

-Pr. Paul

# **President's Corner**

Greetings

The Church Council has two vacancies that need to be filled. One is the Treasurer position, the other is a council member.

The Treasurer is to oversee the books of account of BLC. The day to day accounting is done by the church's bookkeeper. The Treasurer would generally attend three meetings a month – council, executive committee and finance committee.

The council member would attend the monthly council meeting and serve on a committee.

If you would like to volunteer or would like further information, please contact me at 231-946-5120 or VP Mark McPherson at 860-658-1554.

The church building is being opened on a limited basis for small meetings. Groups wishing to meet in the building must provide a Covid safety plan. The plan would include social distancing, wearing of facial masks and cleanup after the meeting. The meeting would be confined to one specific room. The use of the rest rooms would also be allowed. Contact me or Mark McPherson.

Leonard Graf

#### Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Traverse City Michigan "We journey with God to serve with Love"

Minutes from the regular Church Council Meeting July 21, 2020

CALLED TO ORDER: Leonard Graf, Vice President, at 6:06

OPENING PRAYER: by Pastor Busekist

ROLL CALL: Phil Anderson, Maureen Bauer, Pastor Paul Busekist, Nancy Downer, Gail Goldsmith, Leonard Graf, Laura Hahn, Mark McPherson, Cindy Monroe, Jim Monroe, Jan Stretlien, Paul Wiemerslage via phone.

VISITOR/S OR CONGREGATIONAL COMMENT: none

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: with following changes, new members and Services from September moving forward.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

President: Leonard Graf, approved by all

Vice-President: Mark McPherson, approved by all

Secretary: Gail Goldsmith, approved by all

Treasurer: tabled until congregational members can be asked.

Financial Secretary: Jim Monroe, approved by all

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES from Virtual via Zoom Church Council Meeting of June 16, 2020. Motion to approve minutes by Mark McPherson and Seconded by Cindy Monroe, motion carried

**REPORTS**:

Committee Reports have been received and filed by Christian Care, Membership and Evangelism, Financial Secretary report and graph, Youth/Y2A; Annie Slabaugh; Director of Youth and Outreach.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: No report

PASTOR'S REPORT: 1) Pastor Paul discussed the current Zoom Bible Study is wrapping up Luke and Acts and will be moving into more of a book club format with the book "Paul" by Walter Wangerin Jr. Pastor would like to have members volunteer to lead some of the discussions. 2) Pastor would like to invite people to volunteer to be readers for the live worship outside and also Holden Evening Prayer, Virtual worship service for Wednesday evenings. 3) Wednesday Zoom Fellowship will be in a format of a DJ with Pastor and Annie leading, called WBLC. There is also a Facebook Watch component where participants can type in comments, those on Zoom will be seen on Facebook. 4) Pastor has been working with the Task Force to determine how services will continue after September. This is not to substitute for the live church, but looking at ways to be together when it is prohibitive, such as the pandemic, weather. Looking at new ways to be together, safely. Looking at data not desire, He meets with the Task Force to discuss any changes that will occur. Currently church services will continue as outdoor with the congregation to bring their own chairs and wear masks. If weather cooperates. If they prefer people can sit in their cars and listen through their radio, and continue with the drive up Communion. We have to do what is safe and positive. 5) Pastor Paul stated if anyone is having trouble understanding the need for the virtual and outdoor services, please let him know so he can address it. 6) Pastor Paul also said if anyone has any pastoral needs to please let him know as it is important to meet the congregation's needs at this time. 7) Pastor Paul would like to get together with Mark McPherson to write a letter to the congregation regarding the current funding situation.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Jim Monroe, Financial Secretary provided a report with year to date charts. As of the end of June 2020, 41001 contributions are down by about 4% below the amount expected to meet the budget. Jim stated even though it is below the expectation, due to the circumstances we are doing well.

Phil Anderson clarified the difference between pledges and revenue as the pledges may be higher than the actual giving at this time. Also to keep in mind costs are down due to the building being closed and few activities in the church.

CONSENT CALENDAR: COMMITTEE REPORTS: The committee reports when available are: Financial Secretary's report, Christian Care Report, Christian Education Report, Membership and Evangelism, Personnel Report, Property Report, Stewardship Report, Worship and Music, Youth/Y2A Report, Fellowship Report, Visions Report, Endowment Fund Report (Quarterly) and Sustaining Endowment Memorial Fund Report (Quarterly). All reports submitted were accepted as submitted.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Α.

A Motion was made to have Phil Anderson a voting member of Council; was not passed.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

A. Council Vacancy; there remains one vacancy on the Council, Leonard is going to ask a few members of the congregation to see if they are interested in being council members.

- B. Appointments of Committee Chairs:
- a. Christian Care: Jan Stretlien, will continue
- b. Christian Education: Laura Acker, currently not a Council Member
- c. Membership and Evangelism: Cincy Monroe will continue
- d. Personnel: Maureen Bauer
- e. Property: Carl Lehto currently not a Council Member
- f. Stewardship: Mark McPherson and Carl Lehto
- g. Worship and Music: Nancy Downer
- h. Youth/Y2A: Paul Wiemerslage
- i. Fellowship: Laura Hahn

Approved by all.

C. Set date and time of installation of council members, per C.9.03.b.3 September 27th 2020. Approved by all.

D.Resolution of check signers: Leonard Graf, President; Mark McPherson, Vice-President; Jim Monroe, Financial Secretary. Cindy Monroe made the motion to accept check signers, Jan Stretlien seconded the motion, motion passed by all.

E. Membership and Evangelism, Cindy Monroe announced new members Denice and Phil Bossardet and Rose Taylor. Mark McPherson made the motion to accept new members, Jan Stretlien, seconded, motion passed by all.

The Task Force was developed due to COVID-19 will determine how the services will continue safely. Their decisions will be based on Data and will be inventive. Task Force members are: Pastor Paul Busekist, Annie Slabaugh, Sharon Weller, Nancy Downer, Barbara Oster, and Kate Holtfreter. The Task Force is meeting every 2 weeks. Mark McPherson made the motion the Task Force will be empowered to make decisions to guide the church service through this time of change due to the pandemic. Jan Stretlien seconded the motion and the motion carried.

#### VISITOR OR CONGREGATIONAL COMMENT: none

GOOD TO THE ORDER: A time for general/undocumented comments by each Council Member if so desired. LORD'S PRAYER: was said by all.

ADJOURNMENT: Mark McPherson motioned for adjournment, Cindy Monroe seconded, adjournment 8:08 Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Goldsmith, Council Secretary

#### Finance Update – July Financial Results:

July income of \$35,187 exceeded budgeted income of \$31,919 by \$3,268.

July expense of \$36,834 exceeded budgeted expense of \$35,075 by \$1,759.

The good news...if you can call a deficit good news...is July's actual deficit of \$1,647 was lower than the projected budget deficit of \$3,156. This means BLC ended up \$1,509 less in the hole from where we budgeted to be, yet more money went out the door than came in. Contributions were higher than budgeted but not enough to offset expenses.

YTD was a mixed story. Income is \$7,906 lower than budgeted which is a serious concern should the trend continue. YTD expenses are \$20,382 below budget. We budgeted to have a deficit of \$7,512 after 7 months and in reality have a surplus of \$4,964 due to much lower expense over the past seven months. This leaves us \$12,476 ahead of where we budgeted to be. Much of the lower expense level is Covid related (e.g., lower Music & Program Staff salaries, lower custodian expense, property management).

**Pecans are coming! Pecans are coming**! The Worship and Music committee will sell the popular Schermer pecans again this Fall. Instead of having a table set up inside the church, we will take orders for Dark Chocolate Pecans, Caramel Cluster Pecans and Cinnamon Glazed Pecans. The \$12 bags are perfect for holiday or hostess gifts or just plain munching. We will be ordering at the end of September for delivery at the end of October. So that we know how much to order, please contact Barbara Oster (231-668-7038 or beo6475@yahoo.com ) by the end of September.

Due to the unpredictable status of the current COVID-19 virus, the October 10, 2020 Bethlehem Lutheran Art & Craft **Show** will not take place this year. Even with the many safety restrictions, we are still not comfortable with social distancing crafters and shoppers need to maintain. With the show being an indoor event, it would be difficult to keep the 50 creative artists/crafters and the many eager shoppers the required distance. Our goal is to not only make the show enjoyable and safe entering our church, but also to make the fundraiser profitable for the crafters who put countless hours into their creations.

Show Coordinator, Patty Leibenguth



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

Hello Bethlehem! September is here! I'm getting excited for the fall months with all the colors and the chilly weather...but also feeling uncertainty because of all the unknowns. We're figuring out ways to move forward with our fall programming in this environment of COVID-19...but I'm not too worried because we all know that God is with us...and He's got this!





We are finalizing activities for all of our Youth Groups for the Fall Semester. I'm very excited to get

back together with the kids for some socially distant in person activities! Because things are still being finalized, below you will find the dates but please reach out to me if you're interested in finding

out what we are specifically doing this month.

The Middle/Junior High School Group will have Youth Night on Wednesday September 9th.

The High School Group will have Youth Night on Saturday September 19th.

We're also in the process for making decisions for **Confirmation**. Please reach out to myself or Pastor Paul if you have any questions or concerns. We'll let you know the plan soon!

I am still offering **One on Ones** to all of the youth in a virtual capacity. These can be done and be

arranged when it is convenient for you and your families! Just reach out to me if you are interested

and we can figure out a time.

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

As we go into September I ask that you keep Bethlehem's kids and their families in your thoughts

and prayers as they go back to school--whatever that may look like.

"Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)

Cheerfully in Christ, **Annie Slabaugh** Director of Youth and Outreach/ Bethlehem Lutheran Church/Traverse City

#### **STAR and Bulletin Deadlines**

To be sure that your article or announcement is in STAR or Bulletin issue that you want, please note the following deadlines:

STAR: by the third Wednesday of the month

Bulletin: by the Wednesday before each weekend

Submission by email is preferred ( admin@bethlehemtc.org ) with either the word STAR or Bulletin in the subject line. Please write exactly what you want in the article or announcement. Be sure to include all pertinent information about your event, i.e. dates, time, location, etc. You can put it in the body of the email or as an attachment as a Word doc or .pdf. Also, please include the month(s) for the STAR issue or the date(s) for the Bulletin issue that you need your article or announcement included. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Oster at admin@bethlehemtc.org Please do not send these to Sharon.Weller@bethlehemtc.org as this is Sharon's music email and Barbara does not have access to this email. Barbara is the only one who prepares the Star and Bulletin and she shares the admin@bethlehemtc.org email with Sharon.

#### Share your name please

Some of us are finding that not seeing an entire face and dealing with sunglasses causes us to have more difficulty knowing and calling other BLC members by name. If you enjoy being greeted by name please consider placing your name on your dashboard while drive-through communion is occurring. If you have an extra name tag at home you may want to consider wearing it when green space services occur. And please be sure to wear your name tag when the time comes to re-enter church.

#### STAR delivery

Hasn't it been a blessing to have the STAR delivered to your home the past few months? Thanks so much to 2 cherished members who dedicated their time and monetary donation so this could occur. While we continue to have limited/reduced weekend services the membership committee is proposing the following: The STAR will be available for dispersal the first Sunday of the month. For those of you who can make it to the weekend service you will be asked to pick-up your paper STAR. Or, if you prefer to read yours on-line you will be asked to notify the committee. Committee members will mark off those who have received their STAR so paper copies will only be sent to those who do not have one. This way we can make certain that everyone is receiving all of the Hot-off-the-press news and also do this in the most cost-effective manner. Hope to see as many of you as possible on the first Sunday of the month.

#### **BLC Book Club News**

The BLC book club will be reading the book of a local author for its Sept 22 ZOOM meeting at 5:30. Cari Noga wrote *The Orphan Daughter* and the setting is Old Mission Peninsula. The local author, Cari Noga, will be joining us on ZOOM for our meeting! Anyone can join in the discussion by sending their email to Cindy Monroe at <u>cmonroe@chartermi.net</u>





### Christian Education News September 2020



VBS Bible Stories - That's a Wrap! The Christian Education Committee would like to express A VERY HUGE THANK YOU to Annie Slabaugh for all her work this summer putting the many components of this special program together! It was an amazing success, and we are so blessed with her talents!!!

Sunday School: Although we are not able to hold in-person Sunday School yet, the Christian Education Committee is working on plans to safely resume Sunday School for our children. Please watch for more announcements to come in October, and let us know if you'd like to be involved!





We are fervently praying each and every day for our precious Sunday School children and their families! May God bless all of you with safety and good health until we can meet again!! Jesus loves you VERY much, and so do we!!!





The Rev. David R. Rakatonirina, president of the Malagasy Lutheran Church (MLC) succumbed to COVID-19 in July, in Madagascar's capital Antananarivo. He also served on the Lutheran World Federation Council. The MLC has 4 million members. It was founded in 1868. Today it sends missionaries to Bangladesh, Cameroon, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Tanzania.



The Rev. Stephen Deal has been serving as a missionary and regional representative for the ELCA since 1992, when he began as a catechist and evangelist in Guatemala. Currently, he lives with his wife Marta Girón in Costa Rica where Marta serves in the women's ministry of the Costa Rican Lutheran Church. Stephen says the COVID-19 pandemic has presented a new crisis, one that puts migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in greater danger. He has spent hours communicating with companions throughout the region to learn how they're coping, how faith communities have been affected and what emergency needs have arisen.



# Health Concerns\*

# **The Power of Prayer**



Richard Fernholz, Nancy Smith, Tom Miller, Margie Whitney, Jo Hasse, Ellie Tacke, Bev Attwood, Priscilla Thompson, Julie LaPeer, Marleen Baesch, Alvin Kober,, Lynn Hoyt, Thad Hellenga, Jan Waisanen, Molly Eastman, Harper Wiemerslage, Ben Farley, Jennifer Mowers, John Stretlien, Roy & Marilyn Dumond, Shawn Rivard and Brenda Denoyer

Grand Traverse Pavilions: Bev Attwood Homebound: Marleen Baesch Traverse Manor: Margie Whitney, Marinan Bradford French Manor LaFranier: Jo Hasse Boardman Lake Glens: Inge Thomas, Bill & Dee Springer Samaritas (Acme): Priscilla Thompson Cherry Hill Haven: Jerrie Boike

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

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

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

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

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

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

# **HONORING GOD'S CREATION**

#### **SEASON OF CREATION 2020**

Renewing, repairing and restoring our commitments to God, to one another and to all of creation. Weekly devotions for Sept. 1 through Oct. 4, 2020

> SUNDAY SEPT. 27, 2020 Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Anglican Church of Canada + Pentecost 17 (Lectionary 26) Exodus 17:1-1 7 | Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 | Philippians 2:1-13 | Matthew 21:23-32

*I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.* Exodus 17:6

As a settler Canadian, I am accustomed to the ready availability of fresh, clean water at any moment on any day. I have also lived in the Himalayas of India where the provision of water was unpredictable day to day, and what was available had to be boiled thoroughly first because it was not safe to drink. Like the Israelites in the desert, I readily grumbled and complained when it was not available. This became a lesson for me in the dangers of the privileges that I had enjoyed and took for granted in Canada. I became acutely aware that the lack of water was a daily reality for millions of people – and that clean water was even more scarce. I also became aware of those who profit from the bottling and selling of a resource that is a necessity of life and a gift of the Creator.

The ongoing protection and sharing of clean water are part of our baptismal vocation to love neighbour as self and to "safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the earth." Just as Moses followed God's direction in order to offer water to the Israelites in the desert, we are called to partner with those protecting and sharing water. From joining the advocacy of Autumn Peltier, a young Indigenous water protector, to the relief efforts of the Red Cross to our daily habits to conserve and protect water in our community, we are called to share in the provision of God's gift of water now and for future generations.

Creator of all, stir in us the passion to share the living water of the gospel as we also protect and share the waters of your creation to nourish all creatures. Amen.

Suggested hymn: "Now the Green Blade Rises" (Common Praise, 237)

The above is from a devotional from the ELCA, The Episcopal Church, The Anglican Church of Canada and ELCIC. The devotional is found on elca.org – search for "Season of Creation 2020"

# Green Space Worship and Communion

































# BLC Contacts PLEASE NOTE SEVERAL ADDRESS UPDATES

#### **Church Office**

Pastor Paul Busekist	paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org
Admin. Asst. Sharon Weller	admin@bethlehemtc.org
Admin. Aide Barbara Oster	admin@bethlehemtc.org
Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson	bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org
Sharon Weller, Music Director	sharon.weller@bethlehemtc.org
Annie Slabaugh, Youth & Outreach Director	annie.slabaugh @bethlehemtc.org
Website	www.bethlehemtc.org
Church Council	
Leonard Graf, President	Email address in process
Mark McPherson, Vice President	Email address in process
Gail Goldsmith, Secretary	Email address in process
, Treasurer	treasurer.council@bethlehemtc.org
Jim Monroe, Financial Sec.	financialsecretary.council@bethlehemtc.org
Phil Anderson, Bethlehem Vision	Bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org
Jan Stretlien, Christian Care Giving	christiancaregiving.committee@bethlehemtc.org
, Christian Ed.	christianeducation@bethlehemtc.org
Laura Hahn, Fellowship	Email address in process
Cindy Monroe, Membership/Evangelism	membershipevangelism.committee@bethlehemtc.org
, Property (Carl Lehto-Not on Council)	property.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Maureen Bauer, Personnel	Email address in process
Mark McPherson, Stewardship	stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Nancy Downer, Worship and Music	worship.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Paul Wiemerslage, 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).





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Bethlehem Lutheran Church (ELCA) 1050 Peninsula Drive Traverse City, MI 49686 231.947.9880



Shalom, and do not be afraid.

# Smile. God loves you.©