

March 2023



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 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.”



Greetings, and a blessed Lenten season to you all! There are two main things gathering excitement for me this month: the first is our Lenten series "Chosen STILL/s (Snapshots of Salvation)," and the second is sabbatical prep for ALL of us moving forward.

Let's start with Lent, because it is upon us! For the past month or so, I have been watching the amazing and **FREE streaming series about Jesus and his disciples called "The Chosen."** It started with season 1 in 2017, and season 3's finale aired last week. Though I must admit I sometimes cringe at the campiness or narrow interpretations by some Jesus films, this series does an amazing job of maintaining the "authority" of scripture, while using creative license faithfully. A wonderful review of The Chosen by writer Zack James Cole (found at <https://www.1517.org/articles/the-chosen-a-review>) starts with this thought: "Jesus did not come because we had our act together. He came because we couldn't get our act together." We will lay out the five weeks of Lent as seen in the box below, with a little help from Cole! ☺ :

The other exciting topic is that of **sabbatical prep for all of Bethlehem**. I say "ALL" because the sabbatical committee, council and I have tried to emphasize that the whole church is invited to DREAM BIG for the time the church and pastor will be away from each other this summer. Generous fundraising by members will allow us to use the approximate goal of \$15,000 raised to be split into thirds, with \$5k spent on covering preaching, presiding and pastoral/administrative coverage; \$5k spent on the pastor's renewal activities with family; and (this could be the most exciting one for Bethlehem) **\$5k on funding summer activities for the church** that we would not be able to do otherwise (e.g. yoga lessons, cooking/baking lessons, ukulele lessons with Zeke, and so on). **Mark your calendars for Sunday, March 19th during worship,** as we check in to share status and gather momentum together!

Shalom!
-Pr. Paul

"Chosen STILL/s"
(Snapshots of Salvation)

- **Week One: Sun,Thu...1/26,3/2:** Jesus is fully God and fully (hu)man.
- **Week Two: Sun,Thu...3/5,3/9:** Jesus came because we couldn't get our act together.
- **Week Three: Sun,Thu...3/12,3/16** Sinners are drawn to Jesus, and he is pleased to redeem...and forgive.
- **Week Four: Sun,Thu...3/19,3/23** When we stumble, Jesus does not leave us.
- **Week Five: Sun,Thu...3/26,3/30** The Chosen in Review...

A Word from the President

Hello All!

I have been in the hospital and back in rehabilitation. This is hopefully the last of this adventure. I have had 3 surgeries on my foot in 3 months and am still non-weight bearing. Within 4 weeks I should be back walking.

As most of you know, I am a very independent person and this ordeal has really tested my patience. I feel so blessed with so many good friends and my church family who have taken care of me. I've had rides, and people carrying my knee-walker up and down my stairs, running errands, doing my laundry. I can't thank everyone enough for all of the care. Thank you for all of the prayers, they are working and I am mostly grateful for God listening to all of those prayers.

I pray you are all doing well and I hope to be back with you soon.

Shalom
Gail



The season of Lent, and the promise of Easter are just around the corner. Lenten Thursdays will have:

6:00pm Meal: two soups, bread/rolls, a salad, dessert and beverages

7:00pm Services - Only the March 16th Jazz Vespers will be LiveStreamed.

- March 2: Holden Evening Prayer (No Communion)
- March 9: Taize "B" (No Communion)
- March 16: Jazz Vespers **with Communion**
- March 23: Taize "A" (No Communion)
- March 30: Holden Evening Prayer (No Communion)

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 of Faith lessons on Paul's Letter to the Romans. Contact Pr Paul for Zoom information.

Sunday Mornings:

- **Sunday School**: 9:15am-9:45am
- **Adult Education**: 9:15am-9:45am. Discussion will be about the Lessons/Gospel for the day

Choir announcement: The choir will be singing once in March and hopefully three times in April. Make a resolution to add some music to your life! Rehearsals can no longer be on Thursdays due to the Lenten services. They are now tentatively scheduled on Tuesdays March 7 & 14 and Apr 4. Hopefully more rehearsals will be scheduled. Follow the bulletin or contact Tony Bero at bero.tony@gmail.com or 942-1162.

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!!!

BLC Book Club: The BLC book club's March meeting is on the 28th at 5:30 via ZOOM. The book is The Forgotten Room by White, Williams & Willig. 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.

Photo Directory: We have a chance to make a new directory the final week of Sept., 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. Thanks to those who have already volunteered. And please, try to be in town that week. We want everyone's smiling faces in our new directory.

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.

2023 Relay for Life: The American Cancer Society will be holding their annual 24-Hour Relay for Life event on Saturday, June 10, 2023 starting at 10 AM with an opening ceremony to Sunday, June 11, 2023 ending at 10 AM at the Grand Traverse Mall. As a long-time volunteer with the organization, I would like to request your support in the form of monetary donations to the American Cancer Society in support of this great cause, which will impact so many wonderful people who need your help. Thank you very much for your generous donations in the past, which helped the American Cancer Society provide more programs and do more research and advocacy for cancer patients and their caregivers. Your kindness and thoughtfulness is really appreciated! Shelly Nellist

SHEPHERDING A SABBATICAL

It's time to unveil some of what is planned for our congregation during our sabbatical this summer. The committee had an excellent plan to bring back previous leaders or new young leaders who had been nurtured at BLC. Unfortunately, this proved to be much harder to do than anticipated. But we are very pleased to have some wonderful guests.

We will have our own dear Annie preaching in person on 6/25 and via tape on 7/16. Also, Pastor Ruth will be with us to preside twice. She is giving herself a little bit of a "vacation" those days since she will not be preaching. Instead, on 6/11 we will have our own Kate Holtfreter and on 7/9 will be previous member Andrew Monroe.

We thank the synod for being willing to fill 3 of our slots including Bishop Satterlee on 8/13. Pastor Dick Anderson will preside on 6/4 and 7/16. A friend who just retired from ministry at the Methodist church, Pastor Chris Lane will be with us on 7/23. As you read the chart below you can see that we will have Skip Brown from Freedom Builders preaching about the community work we can join in late July. Other familiar faces as presiders will be Cindy Monroe, Sherri Helman, Jana Rockne, and Barbara Oster, and some other well-known preachers will be Peggy Burns, Tom Rockne, and Sherri Helman.

Our goal was to make certain that communion could be celebrated 2 times each month, and we surpassed that. June is the only month that we will only have communion twice.

We will be able to commune 4 of the 5 weeks of July and 3 of the 4 weeks of August.

I think it's safe to say that there will be something for everyone this summer. Mark your calendar now to be with us on Sunday morning...hopefully in person, but if not, be sure to watch on-line.

DATE	PRESIDE	PREACH
5/28	Pr Rosanne Anderson	Same
6/4	Pr Dick Anderson	Skip-Freedom Builder
6/11	Pr Ruth Overdier	Kate Holtfreter
6/18	Cindy	Peggy Burns
6/25	Sherri Helman	Annie (in person)
7/2	Pr David Sprang	same
7/9	Pr Ruth Overdier	Andrew Monroe
7/16	Pr Dick Anderson	Annie-via tape
7/23	Pr Chris Lane	same
7/30	Jana Rockne	Tom Rockne
8/6	Barbara O	Sherri Helman
8/13	Bishop Satterlee	same

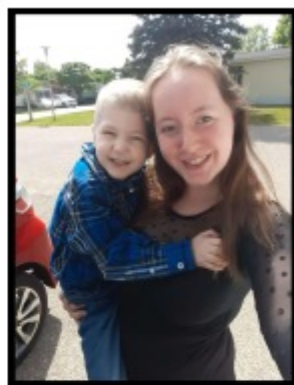
Gary Hogue has volunteered to be back-up if one of the synod clergy is not available due to an emergency.

Cindy has also volunteered to preside and/or preach if one of the synod pastors is not available.

Notes from Alanna...

Hello friends! Sammy and I have loved the time we've been able to spend at Bethlehem so far! I have a goal to be at as many services and events as possible in the upcoming weeks, so you'll probably see us around a lot!

Here's a few exciting updates from me and Y2A-



There will be a **Community Movie Night on Saturday, March 18th at 6:30pm**, showing the Disney Pixar film *Up!* This will be a wonderful opportunity for people of all ages to interact and spend time together - we will invite the community as well, and we are so excited to welcome some new faces! Planning is still ongoing for this, but there will be plenty of information coming soon - keep a lookout!

We hope to have a **Soup/Chili Cookoff on Sunday, April 2nd at 11:30am**. Planning is still ongoing, but again, look out for details coming soon!

We have made the difficult decision that **there will not be VBS this year**. This is for a variety of reasons (limited volunteers, conflicts with the sabbatical, etc.) but we are confident in our decision, and instead look forward to **putting our focus and efforts toward some wonderful intergenerational and community events over the summer!** We are hoping and planning to bring VBS back in 2024. For the time being, I am so excited for some of the things planned for this year, and I hope you are too!

-Alanna Steffunick, Ministry Coordinator

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Psalms 118:24

Christian Education News March 2023

Lent



A Journey Through Lent

Join us for Lent Nights!

WHEN: Thursday nights 3/02, 3/09, 3/16, 3/23, & 3/30

WHAT: Soup & Worship

We'll also have special lessons & crafts for youth -
ALL AGES ARE WELCOME!!!

Community and Intergenerational Event -
please join us!



Saturday 3/18/2023 at 6:30pm

**FAMILY
MOVIE
NIGHT**





NEW MEMBERS: John, Judi Block; Mason, Niki Hengartner, Nathan, Tim, Peggy Goebel; Sherri Helman

FINANCIAL NEWS

January and year to date income was \$29,828 compared to budgeted income of \$29,594 resulted in receiving \$234.00 more than budgeted. Expenses were \$25,166 compared to budget of \$33,308 resulted in spending \$8,142 less than budgeted. On a cash basis income exceeded expenses by \$4,622.

Safety and Security of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Unfortunately we had to cancel our police presentation on Active Shooter situations. It looks like we will have to wait until June to reschedule due to the officer's schedule.

We will be having discussions and doing fire drills soon. This spring we will have tornado drills. The committee is working on ways to keep our congregation and visitors safe. Be safe and hopefully Spring will be here soon.

The future of Bethlehem Lutheran Church Art & Craft Shows

"Many hands make work light."

We were blessed to have many church volunteers assist the 45 artists and crafters to support our fourth show and the leading church fundraiser with ≈\$4,000.00 on November 5th. To continue future shows, a designated Craft Show Team is needed, and we are reaching out to you to help make that happen.

The following Leader Positions are needed for a successful team:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| - Silent Auction Leader | - the month of October to November 15 |
| - Quilt Raffle Leader | - the month of October and day of the show |
| - Volunteer Leader | - the month of October and day of the show |
| - Photographer | - the day of the show |

Patty Leibenguth and Kris Smith can no longer take on all responsibilities it takes to put on this wonderful fundraiser. The future of our leading church fundraiser is in your hands. We hope to hear from you. Please contact Patty Leibenguth (jpleiby@charter.net) at 231-499-2816 or Kris Smith (k2silversmith@yahoo.com) at 231-360-3026. Blessings and thank you.



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

ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

News from Around the World

On Jan. 22, Sally Azar became the *first woman* ordained in the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land**. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton participated in the ordination service, along with 18 of the ELCA's synod bishops and leaders.

Jaqueline Canada graduated from Centro Intereclesial de Estudios Teologicos y Sociales (**CIEETS: Inter-Ecclesial Center for Theological and Social Studies**) in **Nicaragua**. Jaqueline, 35, leads a congregation in Nicaragua. She spent five years working toward her undergraduate degree at CIEETS, to better serve her faith community. In **partnership with the ELCA**, CIEETS created a program that offered women students extra guidance as they completed their final projects. Altogether, 15 women completed their degrees.



WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM - MARCH, 2023



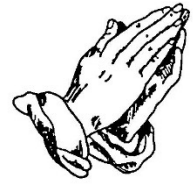
SPRING GATHERING: There will be a gathering of the women of Michigan's Lower Michigan Synod at Trinity Lutheran Church in Kalamazoo on April 22nd. If you are interested in attending please let Nancy Ammann know as soon as possible - 946-8433.

UPDATE ON BABY PANTRY DONATIONS: Suggested donations for March are laundry soap, paper products and food. Note that food stamps, etc do not cover cleaning products so any of those products are also welcome and appreciated. Please have your donations here before March 9th as that is Baby Pantry Day. Thanks You!

GATHER BIBLE STUDY: Our circles are studying the Ten Commandments. So far we have covered the first four. If you wish to join this study, please contact Nancy Ammann 946-8433.

A BIG WELCOME TO SPRING!!

Health Concerns*



The Power of Prayer

*Richard Fernholz, Nancy Smith, Tom & Lee Miller,
Margie Whitney, Ellie Tacke, Rose Taylor,
Julie Lapeer, Alvin Kober, Milt & Carol 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 Schmidt
Betsy Morley, Gail Goldsmith*

French Manor South: Brenda Denoyer **Orchard Creek:** Jan Waisanen, Gail Goldsmith
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.

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

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

PLEASE NOTE SEVERAL ADDRESS UPDATES

Church Office

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

Church Council

Gail Goldsmith, President	president.council@bethlehemtc.org
Maureen Bauer, Vice President	vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org
Jana Rockne, Secretary	secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org
Leonard Graf, Treasurer	treasurer.council@bethlehemtc.org
Jim Monroe, Financial Sec.	financialsecretary.council@bethlehemtc.org
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Cindy Monroe, Membership/Evangelism	membershipevangelism.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Chuck Ardingo, (not on Council), Property	property.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Maureen Bauer, Personnel	personnel.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Scott Farley, Stewardship	stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Denice Bossardet, Worship and Music	worshipmusic.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).

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	1	2	3	4
10am - Worship Service(S) 11:15am - Worship and Music 12:30pm - Confirmation Class	7pm - All Star DE	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 10am - Staff Meeting 7pm - All Star DE 7pm - Choir Rehearsal	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 7pm - All Star DE	5:30pm - ACA 6pm - Lenten Meal 7pm - Lenten Service 9am - Baby Pantry Setup 10am - Baby Pantry-FH 1pm - Rebecca Anna Circle 5:30pm - ACA 6pm - Lenten Meal 7pm - All Star DE 7pm - Lenten Service	12pm - XYZ Potluck	1pm - Funeral (Offsite) Thayer,
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10am - Traditional Worship	1pm - Finance Cmte. 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 7pm - Choir Rehearsal	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 7pm - All Star DE	5:30pm - ACA 6pm - Lenten Meal 7pm - All Star DE 7pm - Lenten/Third Thursday	STAR articles due today 10am - Sew Pieciful	11am - Funeral - Irene Downey 6:30pm - Community Movie
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10am - Worship Service(S) 12:30pm - Confirmation Class	5pm - All Star DE	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 5pm - All Star DE 6:30pm - Council Meeting 7pm - Laubner SG @ at the home	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1pm - Johnson SG (Offsite) 5pm - All Star DE	5:30pm - ACA 6pm - Lenten Meal 7pm - All Star DE 7pm - Lenten Service		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10am - Worship Service(S)		Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters(FH) 9am - Property Work Group 5pm - All Star DE	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal	5:30pm - ACA 6pm - Lenten Meal 7pm - All Star DE		
25	27	28	29	30	31	1
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	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal	5:30pm - ACA 6pm - Lenten Meal 7pm - Lenten Service		



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Shelly Nellist, CISR

Personal Risk 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 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:

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

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
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