June 2023



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



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

<u>Building Hours</u>: Monday – Thursday, 9am to 2:30pm

<u>Office Hours:</u> Monday – Thursday, 9am to 2:30pm Worship Times:

<u>Sunday:</u> 10 am Modern Worship including Communion with service Livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube Sunday School/Adult Ed/Third Thursday Worship: Will resume in the Fall 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."



"Oh give thanks to the LORD, for God is good, Whose steadfast love endures forever!" -1 Chronicles 16:34



Dear Bethlehem sisters and brothers,

I "sign off" this summer in a spirit of thanksgiving – for sabbatical time and all things good. As I shared on Ascension Sunday and the send-off luncheon (thank you!), this much-anticipated sabbath time for both pastor and church is sure to be abundant with blessings to refresh, renew and re-energize us all. For myself and family, we hope to do some traveling but will mostly be resting locally with quality spiritual and family time. A favorite idea Parker and I put together was a weekly father-son activity we're calling "Guy Day Fridays" – trips to favorite TC places like Sleeping Bear Dunes and Michigan spots like Alpena and the Soo Locks to see ships, museums, and possibly a concrete dinosaur or two! We even hope to have a "Guy Day Multi-Day" trip to St. Louis complete with "planes, trains, and automobiles." Meredith and I will have a brief couples getaway to Beaver Island in June, along with some much-needed puppy obedience class for Teddy, a family trip in August with friends, and a pastors retreat in July.

Along the way, I encourage you to **provide feedback online for any Sabbatical activities** you may be doing with Bethlehem at this link: **https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8NB35RM**

Yet we know the busyness of Bethlehem continues in our absence. June's Congregational Meeting will be about more than the election of officers. This past year, an ad-hoc committee studied the pro's and con's of selling the church rental house, and Council has voted on a recommendation to bring to a congregational vote this June. I see the wisdom of both keeping and selling, so the main point I would like to raise is this: If we sell the house, might not the proceeds inspire us to do more than simply pay down a church mortgage faster or fix a few things that need attention a few years early? In truth, those things would happen regardless in the next few years. Might we additionally hear the call of the Holy Spirit to be and do more than just maintenance and easier budgeting? Could we be BOTH fiscally responsible AND challenge ourselves to stretch beyond today's ministry to embody something new of the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ in this community? Such a ministry comes later, after a decision, and after some new visioning... But I believe planting the seed now is the key... lest we slip into "church busyness as usual." Just a thought, and prayer, as we part ways for the summer. \bigcirc

Shalom always, Pr. Paul

A Word from the President

We had a very busy month of May with cleaning the church, Mother's Day, sending Pastor Paul off for Sabbatical and Memorial Day.

Summer is here and I am wishing everyone a wonderful season. Summer is a season of beginnings, the flowers bloom, everything is turning green, and people take their vacations.

June is also the end for many things; school is out, many are graduating and moving on with their lives. It can be bittersweet. Groups of friends may never be together again, but they meet new friends, often lifelong friends. Ironically recently I have heard the phrase as one door closes another one opens. This time of year reminds me of that.

Have a wonderful month of June and a Happy Father's Day to all of the Dads and Grandfathers and Congratulations to all of the Graduates.

Blessings to you All Gail Goldsmith

SHEPHERDING A SABBATICAL

Sabbatical is here! We have planned for so long. We pray Pastor Paul, Meredith and Parker have a great summer, with some travel, relaxing and a chance to refresh. They so deserve it!

Pastor Paul is planning on some travel with his family to Beaver Island, Chicago to meet up with extended family, Sault Saint Marie and Pictured Rocks and his big trip will be by himself to the Shepherd's Canyon Pastors Education and Spiritual Retreat. He is mostly excited about day trips he is planning with Parker to have Father/Son time, including a train trip and a visit with some dinosaurs.

And back here at Bethlehem for the month of June: we have Chair Yoga with Jeana Seidelman planned every Monday at 4:00 in the Fellowship Hall, a great way to stretch and do gentle exercise. All are welcome!

June 10th is baking cinnamon rolls with Phil Bossardet. Maybe we will learn his secret ingredient. We will begin at noon. It is a bake and take activity so we can take the yummy cinnamon rolls home to enjoy.

Bike and Beer, Paul Wiemerslage is leading this group, you can choose to bike or hike or drive up and meet at HopLot Brewing Company in Suttons Bay. We will meet up there at 3:00 on Saturday June 17th. The Sabbatical funds will pay for appetizers for the group. You are welcome to order something else to eat if you like. Drinks will be purchased by the individuals.

Bethlehem's Congregational Meeting is scheduled for June 25th, there will be Sundaes on Sunday immediately after the meeting. So stay for the meeting and have a refreshing ice cream Sundae.

Stay tuned for activities in July!

Dale Wentzloff is going to teach a Pickle Ball class, please sign up in the Narthex and let him know when you would like to have the class.

The following is the list providing the pulpit supply in Pastor Paul's absence for the month of June:

Date	Preaching	Worship Leader	<u>Communion</u>
May 28th	Dr. Gary Hogue	Dr. Gary Hogue	yes
June 4th	Skip Brown/Freedom Builders	Pastor Richard Anderson	yes
June 11th	Kate Holtfreter	Pastor Ruth Overdier	yes
June 18th	Peggy Burns	Sherri Helman	no
June 25th	Annie Slabaugh	Barbara Oster	no

Peggy Burns will cover any pastoral care.

Please call the office Monday through Thursday for any needs you may have.

Let's all enjoy our Sabbatical also.

Freedom Builds Needs Our Help:

Freedom Builders is a wonderful ministry in our area. They help to build ramps and make homes accessible for people in need.

Now they are in need of a large building to store their supplies. If you have such a space or know of one for sale at a reasonable price they would appreciate your input. If they have to purchase a place they will need size-able donations dedicated towards their building fund. For any questions or assistance contact Skip Brown at 231-642-7140 or skip@fbmissions.org. **Bethlehem's week for volunteering at Freedom Builders will be July 17-22.**

The Two Wednesday Bible Studies: Adult Bible Study and Zoom Bible Study along with the Sunday School and Sunday Adult Education are taking the summer off and will resume in the Fall.

<u>A big thank you to all who turned in Olesons' receipts.</u> We just received a check from them for \$304.88. Last year received \$651.20. Let's see if we can do even better this year! Please continue to drop off your receipts at Bethlehem. <u>Please note they do not expi</u>re. Thank you!

BLC Book Club: The BLC book club's June meeting is on the 27th at 5:30 in person in the office conference room and via ZOOM. The book is *Lottery* by Patricia Wood. This book is fiction but the author knows the topic well since her father won 6 million dollars in the Washington State Lottery in 1993!! Books will be available in the bin outside the front door. If you are not on the email list and want to be involved send your information to cmonroe@chartermi.net.

Special music will be provided by a Barbershop Quartet at the beginning of the service on June 11. Be sure to be in the sanctuary early or have your Facebook or youtube ready to watch and listen. It should be a special treat as part of our Sabbatical.

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

Food Pantry: With the return of good weather we have re-opened our outdoor food pantry to the community. Please be watching for special deals so you can help us restock our pantry. It's pretty slim pickings right now. The shelves are labeled so if the church is not open you can put your gifts right in. Or, when the church is open you can bring them to the "offering" table in the coat room. Thanks

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.

<u>BABY PANTRY</u>: Suggested donations for May are: cleaning/paper products plus toothpaste and shampoo – especially baby shampoo. Thank you!

<u>Contra Dancing by Bayside Travellers</u> Contra dancing is similar to square dancing, and each of their dances feature live music by local folk bands. They will be back with us for dancing on June 10th, and monthly dances through the rest of the 2023 year. All are welcome to attend, no partner or experience is necessary! The dances are by donation. For more information or further dates, please reach out to Alanna at alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org

<u>GOLF OUTING</u>: If you are interested in a golf outing this summer, please let either Phil Anderson or Barbara Wright know. It will probably be 9 holes on a Sunday afternoon.

Notes from Alanna...

Hello everyone! Summer is here and Sabbatical has started, so there are many things to be part of. I encourage you to explore the exciting new experiences and events that are going on at BLC!

Bayside Travellers will be back for another contra dance on June 10th. I invite you to come check it out - it's an amazing way to meet lots of different people and learn about traditional folk music and dance. No experience required! Pastor Paul and Meredith even joined us at the last dance and did an incredible job. Follow their example and try out

something new! Please feel free to reach out to me if you have questions or want to know more about contra dancing!

As we start planning our programming for the fall, I have a question for you: What would you like to see at BLC? More movie nights? Craft nights? Volunteer opportunities? I would love to hear your opinions and ideas, so please feel free to connect with me!

-Alanna Steffunick, Ministry Coordinator This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it! Psalms 118:24





FINANCIAL NEWS

April income was \$35,122 compared to budgeted income of \$30,248 resulting in receiving \$4,873 more than budgeted. Expenses were \$29,525 compared to budget of \$40,842 resulting in spending in \$11,317 less than budgeted. On a cash basis income exceeded expenses by \$5,597.

Year to date income was \$116,460 compared to budgeted income of \$120,831 resulting in receiving \$4,371 less than budgeted. Expenses were \$118,581 compared to budget of \$138,566 resulting in spending \$19,985 less than budgeted. On a cash basis expenses exceeded income by \$2,121.

Norm Fred has helped a previously homeless couple for a few years. They are proud people and do not like to be given charity but they will accept help in the form of donated cans that they can recycle for money. Please bring in your recyclables in for them. Leave them by the garage. These are nice people. There, but for the Grace of our God, go we.

Norm Fred took many photos at Pr Paul's Send-Off Luncheon on May 21st. There are too many to put in the STAR so Norm gave us the link to access them. They will be on this site for 6 months and then they will be deleted.

http://www.brcleansweep.org/2023-0521-BLC-S/

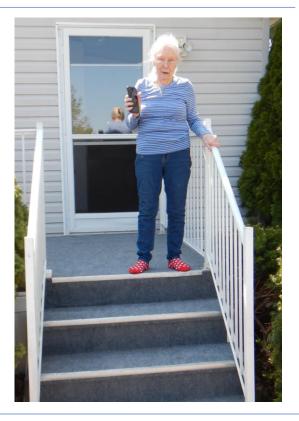
BLC's Mission outreach to our own

Many of us have used our talents and have worked to help others in this community and in ones far way. But we feel that we can do a lot of good with our God given talents right here in our own church.

Last month, the Men's Group Outreach Committee did our first mission project to help a member of our own BLC congregation.

Jacque Rossfeld, a congregant who has volunteered to provide dinners, snacks, sweets and picnics to our congregation and the BRCS for many years and who is legally blind, needed a new deck railing that was damaged when she hit it with her car and new carpeting that was worn out to be replaced on her deck.

Frank Wall, Tom Christensen and Norm Fred stepped up and did it for her on an afternoon after we had worked at church.



BLC RENTAL PROPERTY: As a response to an ad hoc committee that was charged to study what the church should do with the rental property at 1020 Peninsula Dr., the church council accepted their recommendation to sell the property and passed it on to the congregation for their consideration. A copy of the committee's report is available at the church office. (Frequently Asked Questions are on the next two pages of this STAR issue)

Therefore the following motion will be made at the June annual meeting:

I move that Bethlehem Lutheran Church authorize the church council to sell house and property at 1020 Peninsula Dr., Traverse City, Michigan. The legal description is: Lots 12 and 13, Block 3, Plat of Bayside Addition to Traverse City and the East 8 feet of the vacated ally lying West and adjacent to.

Frequently Asked Questions

BLC Rental Property

1. What is the history of the rental property?

The rental property was purchased in 2005 for \$154,000. Justification included:

- Potential future expansion; for building or parking area
- · Would allow for housing for interim or supply pastor if needed
- · Would allow for temporary housing for a new senior or associate pastor if needed
- Provide additional storage for property maintenance
- Home could be rented out for additional church income.

2. Who is recommending sale?

Council created an ad-hoc committee in January to explore options related to the rental property. The committee looked at three options.

- · No change...keep the rental as is.
- · Raise money to fix up the rental house.

Sell

The ad-hoc committee recommended the "sell" option. The Finance Committee reviewed and agreed with the recommendation, as did Council.

3. Why now?

Council looked at both short-term and long-term cash needs. Several past budgets have been passed as deficit budgets. The 2023 budget was passed last December with a \$32,015 deficit. Other than personnel expense, mortgage expense is the second largest expense item in the budget. Long term there are significant maintenance, repair and replacement expenses on the horizon.

Re-roof church sanctuary: \$145,000 Replace boilers: \$59,000 Carpet replacement: \$70,000 Paving alley: \$21,000

A sale would generate sufficient funds to pay off the mortgage and increase available funds in the Asset Replacement Account.

4. What is the Asset Replacement Account?

It is a separate account holding funds specifically allocated to repair/replace assets when needed. Think of it as a rainy-day fund so monies are available when assets need repair/replacement. Its current balance is approximately \$22,000. This account shows up on BLC's Consolidated Balance Sheet.

5. How much money would a sale potentially bring us?

The property was reviewed by a realtor who toured the house and prepared a market analysis. It is estimated a sale would <u>net</u> \$260,000 - \$290,000. An internet search would show you an estimated gross sale price of \$313,000. The condition of the house is harder to gauge its impact ultimate impact on our sale price. The listing price will depend on the market at that time it is listed. A sale would enable pay off the mortgage with a significant amount left to build up the Asset Replacement Account

6. Why place left over funds in the Asset Replacement Account?

This would help ensure funds are utilized in tangible ways to repair or replace church assets. It also increases the funds that are readily available when needed and avoids the temptation of windfall spending.

- What is the status of our mortgage and what happens when it is paid off? Our last payment is scheduled for November 1, 2025. Our cash flow would improve \$4,450 each month.
- 8. How do we ensure the \$4,450 monthly savings by eliminating the mortgage payment would be used to support long term needs and not frittered away to cover annual budget deficit spending?

The Council makes all budget and spending decisions. Their intent is to maintain discipline in spending to avoid this problem.

(Propose Council have a statement of intent stating 80% (\$3,550) of the monthly savings be transferred directly to the Asset Replacement Fund each month until November 2025. The remaining \$900/mo could help address our deficit. November 2025 was chosen because that is when our mortgage would have expired and the mortgage payment gone away. There is a concern elimination of the mortgage will open the gates for more and more spending. A second concern was some folks might be tempted to decrease their level of giving if they see our expense level greatly decrease. This proposal will be explained further in April's Council Meeting.)

9. Why would we want to get rid of an asset like the house?

Think of this a swap of assets...replacing one asset (rental property) with another asset (cash). Cash is an asset that used wisely will increase the value of our church property.

10. What considerations other than financial went in to this decision?

Having a rental property can distract from the mission of the church. There are administrative (e.g., bookkeeping, budgeting) and property expenses (e.g., maintenance, repair) and support efforts needed to keep the rental.

11. What happens if the best offer we get is much lower than anticipated?

It depends on the reason for a lower offer. If it is because the house is more of a tear down, then selling now is the better route. A depreciating house is not going to bring more in the future. If the reason is the overall real estate market is soft and you think it will improve in the near future then you may want to wait...and hope the boilers don't die and the roof doesn't leak.

12. Why not ride out our mortgage until November 2025 at which time our mortgage payment will go away anyway? Then we can fund maintenance and repair from cash flow.

Couple thoughts here. How do we get to November 2025? With a \$32,015 deficit budget this year, it is likely the 2024 and 2025 budgets may also have large deficits meaning we will be living off of our checking/saving balance. Proactive repairs cannot be undertaken, forcing us to react only after a problem arises. Waiting until November 2025 to get \$4,450 increase in monthly cash flow will not sufficiently fund repairs listed in #3 above.

13. Next steps if approved:

- a. Council will sign a listing agreement with realtor.
- b. Council reviews offers and determines if price is acceptable.
- c. Council will sign all documentation and allocate funds within BLC accounts.



Mission Support from Congregations to the Larger Church

ELCA Companion Synod relationships are strengthened through constant communication among companions, participation in joint online events, mutual pastoral and delegation visits, youth exchanges, the hosting of visitors, praying for each other, and through **international consultations.** Three events will take place in 2023 in: Sudan, Latin America, and India.

The gatherings provide a wonderful opportunity for congregational members to meet with companion churches to come together and agree on a specific agenda. Partners involved in these meetings discuss mutual strategic priorities, thematic focuses, and commit to deepen their engagement and to support each other in mission and ministry.

BLC's contribution to mission support enables these relationships to flourish and to be strengthened.



WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM - JUNE 2023



BABY PANTRY NEEDS: The focus for June is: paper towels, toothpaste and brushes, baby shampoo and any other cleaning products.

SUMMER BIBLE STUDY:

Boot

Re: 3 85

WHEN? AUGUST 16TH - NOON

WHERE? LEHTO HOME, 15793 SMOKEY HOLLOW ROAD WHAT? POTLUCK LUNCH - BRING DISH TO PASS, LAWN CHAIR, BIBLE, AND STUDY FROM GATHER MAGAZINE

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY TO ALL MEN WHO HAVE HAD A FATHER, ARE A FATHER &/OR A GRANDFATHER AND MENTOR TO ALL CHILDREN. GOD'S BLESSINGS TO YOU ALL!

Health Concerns*



The Power of Prayer

Richard Fernholz, Nancy Smith, Tom & Lee Miller, Margie Whitney, Ellie Tacke, 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, Jennifer Mowers, Debbie Knopf, Gail Goldsmith, Beverly Richardson

French Manor South: Brenda DenoyerOrchard Creek: Jan Waisanen, Gail GoldsmithGrand Traverse Pavilions:Margie WhitneyEvergreen Cottage:Milt & Carol Bowes

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

Prayer Requests:

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

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...

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 Admin. Asst. Barbara Oster Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson Tony Bero, Music Director Alanna Steffunick, Ministry Coordinator Website **Church Council** Gail Goldsmith, President Maureen Bauer, Vice President Jana Rockne, Secretary Leonard Graf, Treasurer Jim Monroe, Financial Sec. Jim Hinds, Christian Care Giving Paul Wiemerslage, Christian Ed. Laura Hahn, Fellowship Cindy Monroe, Membership/Evangelism Chuck Ardingo, (not on Council), Property Maureen Bauer, Personnel Scott Farley, Stewardship Denice Bossardet, Worship and Music Paul Wiemerslage, Youth/Y2A Pastor Paul Busekist

paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org admin@bethlehemtc.org bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org bero.tony@gmail.com Alanna.Steffunick@bethlehemtc.org www.bethlehemtc.org

president.council@bethlehemtc.orgvicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.orgsecretary.council@bethlehemtc.orgtreasurer.council@bethlehemtc.orgfinancialsecretary.council@bethlehemtc.orgchristiancaregiving.committee@bethlehemtc.orgchristianeducation.committee@bethlehemtc.orgfellowship.committee@bethlehemtc.orgmembershipevangelism.committee@bethlehemtc.orgpersonnel.committee@bethlehemtc.orgstewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.orgstewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.orgyouth.committee@bethlehemtc.orgyouth.committee@bethlehemtc.orgyouth.committee@bethlehemtc.orgpaul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org

If you have an interest in serving on any of the above Committees, Please contact the Committee Chairperson(s).

2	12pm - Making Cinnamon Rolls 7pm - Contra Dance - Bayside	10am - Sew Pieceful	6pm - All Star DE	
5:30pm - ACA	8	5:30pm - ACA	5:30pm - ACA	6:30pm - ACA
5	11:30am - Music Rehearsal 11:30am - WELCA Board meeting 4:30pm - Safety and Security	11:30am - Music Rehearsal	11:30am - Music Rehearsal	11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1pm - Johnson SG (Offsite)
8	Builetin articles due today Sam - Property Work Group 10am - Staff Meeting	13 Bulletin articles due today Sam - Property Work Group 12pm - Sarah Circle - FH 1pm - Friendship Bible Study 6pm - V2A.Christian Ed Meeting 6:30pm - Executive Comte.(CR)	20 Bulletin articles due today Sam - Property Work Group 6:30pm - Council Meeting 7pm - Lauther SG @ at the home	8ultetin articles due today Sam - Property Work Group &:30pm - Book/Supper Club
58	4pm - Chair Yoga	1pm - Finance Cmte. 4pm - Chair Yoga	4pm - Chair Yoga	4pm - Chair Yoga
	10am - Worship Service(S) 11:15am - Worship and Music	19	18	10am - Worship Service(S) 11:15am - Congregational 11:10am - Sundaes on Sunday





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Shelly Nellist, CISR

Personal Risk Manager

Direct (231) 944-7616 | snellist@larkingrp.com 13900 S W Bay Shore Dr. Traverse City, MI 49684







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.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church (ELCA) 1050 Peninsula Drive Traverse City, MI 49686 www.bethlehemtc.org



Pr Paul's Page Rental Property Sale Motion and FAQs Sabbatical activities Book Club 2023 Relay for Life Baby and Food Pantries info Bayside Travellers Contra Dancing Notes from Alanna Christian Education News Financial News BLC's Mission outreach to our own Link to photos of Pr Paul's Send-Off ELCA Global Links Women of Bethlehem 2023 The Power of Prayer

Lots of cool information inside