

April 2024



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 Education: 9:15am

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.”

¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

- Jesus of Nazareth, Matthew 28:19-20 (NRSV)



“Go therefore and make disciples...” I am struck by the first word of this favorite passage at the very end of Matthew’s gospel: Go.

Going is the last thing Jesus asks (ahem, *tells!*) us to do at the end of Matthew’s story. Going is also the last topic/theme from our Lenten **Red Letter Challenge**. Going is taking the Word and making it heard, and sharing how God has transformed our lives. And Going is taking the time to do what many of us Lutherans awkwardly (and politely!) shy away from: telling the story. True, we love to sing the old hymn “I Love Tell the Story” (ELW 661). And we might deem it safe to share that story among friends. **But what is it about evangelizing that makes us so uncomfortable?** I stumbled upon a blog called “Eighth Day Strategies” which posted an editorial called “Evangelism? We Don't Do That. We're (Lutheran, or Presbyterian, or Episcopal, or...)” Here’s what that writer says about “telling the story” as a member of a “mainline” denomination like our own:

“[As Lutherans merging together in the past century into one large denomination,] joining the mainline was the beginning of not sharing our faith. It is true for all mainline traditions. The word “mainline” came from Philadelphia where well to do people could live in neighborhoods well served by the best trains (the “main lines”). Well to do people lived in these communities and formed well to do congregations. In some ways “mainline” is synonymous with [people “of means” who were the “in crowd,” so to speak...] These churches didn’t do evangelism. They simply stood proud and were open to all who wanted to join them to come and be a part of the success they shared. It was a circular system. Joining a mainline church gave the member status. Joining a mainline church made the church stronger. Everybody wins.”

To be fair, I’m a tad more hopeful in the near term for mainline denominations like ours and our neighbors. Yet I agree that with the implication that we don’t really “win” in the gospel when we shy away from telling our faith story and God’s story. Instead, our silence encourages us all to become more timid in faith and our outreach to the world or the person sitting next to us. Starting this month, Bethlehem begins building a new Visioning Team that may soon invite us all to explore together what’s on the horizon, and how we might tell the story differently. Join us, beyond the cross of Holy Week and the open Easter tomb, as we discover who and what meets us on the road ahead, and what opportunities we might have to share... today and always. In peace...

- Pr. Paul

PROSE FROM THE PREZ:

When the crocus and snowdrops start pushing their way up from the ground and we have a few nice warm days I always want to burst into a song I learned back in high school, “Spring is Here”! It begins...Spring is here...it’s spring, spring, spring! When I see a robin wingin’ I always feel like singin’ Spring is in the air... I can’t find it on Google so you’ll have to ask me to sing it to you if you want to hear the rest. As we enjoy the blessings of the Easter resurrection and spring let us show our thanks! We need to be especially thankful for Gail Goldsmith, Judy Block, and Laura and Dan Hahn who have made certain that we have wonderful food and fellowship during all of the Thursdays of Lent. And be thankful for the dedicated team of Kathy Ancinec and Christine Hubert who have been working tirelessly behind the scenes to shepherd our church directory through a rather difficult company. Be sure to give each an extra word of thanks if you see any of them.

One final word since I know that many of you plan ahead...our annual congregational meeting will be Sunday June 16. Yes, it is Father’s Day, but it’s the only Sunday in June that Pastor Paul and your council officers could all be present. Maybe you can convince your kids or grandkids to come visit you, bring them to church, you stay for a brief meeting while they go home and get the grill going, and then you all have a wonderful day. Please make the effort.

Enjoy a wonderful Easter and blessed spring. - Cindy Monroe BLC Council President

Safety and Security Locking the Doors

The doors were locked during services beginning in February for a 3 month trial. This will continue until the end of April. Your feedback regarding locking the door during worship services will help the church council proceed with a more long term plan. This will also assist the committee members to determine how we can best monitor the doors during services. In order to monitor the doors our volunteer force will need to increase significantly. There is a sign up sheet in the Gathering Space.

The committee members are Gail Goldsmith, Maureen Bauer, Jana Rockne and Jan Stretlien, we would be happy to answer any questions.

Thank You!!! The Fellowship Committee would like to thank so many for the help during the Lenten dinners. Soups were provided by Laura Hahn, Paul and Jessica Wiemerslage, Jim and Cindy Monroe, Maureen Bauer, Tom and Jana Rockne, Betsy Morley, Kay Rumbaugh, Terry Farmer and Gail Goldsmith. There was a nice variety and delicious soups.

Salads were provided by Judy Block. We also had a nice variety of desserts provided by Tim and Peggy Goebel, Judy Block, Betty Rutilla, Cindy Monroe, Barbara Oster and Gail Goldsmith.

We had so many who helped with set up and clean up. Many hands make light work and it is so true. Thank you to Dave Pepler, Dan and Laura Hahn, Jim and Cindy Monroe, Maureen Bauer, Paul Wiemerslage, Nancy Ammann, Betsy Morley, Tom and Jana Rockne, Judy Block and Tina Dohm. (I hope I didn't miss anyone.) we so appreciated your help.

Council Nominations open for council 2024.

We have been blessed! Many of the council members have agreed to continue with another term. Have you been thinking this would be a good place for you to increase your involvement at Bethlehem? It involves a 3 year commitment to attend a meeting on the 3rd Tues of the **month** and perhaps one other meeting per month. The current members are hard-working and dedicated, and always ready with an intelligent question or a quick quip. If this sounds like your kind of people please contact the office at 947-9880 or contact any of the following: Pastor Paul, Cindy Monroe, Paul Wiermerslage, Jana Rockne, or Gary Ancinec. WE would love to have you on the TEAM!

DIRECTORY UPDATE: Our correction list for the 2nd proof has been submitted. Once received, we'll review it, hopefully finding no other mistakes. We will then sign off on it and wait for final print. We have not been given any wait-time estimate for its printing.

To our Bethlehem family- Tom and I would like to thank all the folks who visited him, sent cards, brought him communion, sung Christmas carols and inducted him into the BLC Veterans group. He is so proud to wear his Army Medical Care baseball cap. You truly are your brothers keepers. God bless you all, Tom (Woodworth) and Inga (Nyquist)

A big thank you to all who have turned in Olesons' slips. On January 14, we received a check from them for \$255.85. Olesons' slips never expire. Please continue to turn in your receipts to Bethlehem. Thanks so much!!!

Contra Dancing by Bayside Travellers 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 **April 13th**. 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

Food Pantry: It will be SPRING by the time you read this so hopefully we will not need to be concerned about the cold damaging any of our food. Please start looking for staple items when they are on sale and bring your extras to the coat room. Your generosity is so appreciated.

Wednesday Bible Studies:

Adult Bible Study: meets in the Youth Room from 9:30-11:30am, with the Acts of the Apostles..

The Zoom Book and Bible Study: meets on Wednesdays from 1:30-3:00pm. Now that the *Red Letter Challenge* is complete, the group will continued with the Book of Mark on April 3rd.

Adult Education in the Youth Room plus Sunday School - every Sunday at 9:15am

The next Third Thursday service will be a Holden Evening Prayer service on April 18th at 7:00pm. The service will be livestreamed. The BLC Fellowship Committee will be providing a meal at 5:45 p.m. Please come early and share in fellowship and stay for the service.

April's XYZ Potluck & Presentation will be on Friday, April 12th at 12pm noon. While primarily geared toward seniors, the group is open to any adult who would like to attend! XYZ meets monthly September through May for a potluck lunch, followed by a program or presentation. April's presenter is Lori Kroger, RN. Lori and her daughter Karla are co-owners of Northern Elderberry, a local business focused on natural, healthy living and sharing wellness with others. Their elderberry products are distributed by several local business, including Oryana and Fresh Coast Market."

FOR BOOK CLUB MEMBERS AND ANY WHO LOVE TO READ:

The book club will discuss *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride during a dinner meeting at 5:30 on Tues Apr 23 at The Cottage. Extra copies will be available on the counter below the mailboxes. Just sign your name on the sheet by the corresponding number of your book. If you cannot come to church when it is open please contact Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net and we will make other arrangements.

New member gathering to be scheduled: Please contact Pastor Paul, the office at 947-9880 or Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net if you are considering membership at Bethlehem. The next gathering will be scheduled for April or May.

Notes from Alanna...

Movie Night - Enjoy Dinner & a Show on Us!

Adults and children of all ages are invited to join us on Saturday, April 20th for dinner and a movie! Hotdogs, chips and drinks will be served at 5:30pm, and we'll be showing the movie Elemental at 6pm. All BLC members are invited as well as the local community, so bring your friends and family with you! We're excited to see you!



Volunteers Needed!

We will be looking for volunteers for two very important events this summer! More details and sign-up information will be out soon, but please mark these dates on your calendar now so you can be ready!

Parking Lot Fundraiser: June 29th, June 30th, July 4th

BLC Vacation Bible School: July 29th, 30th, 31st

-Alanna Steffunick, Ministry Coordinator

"...with that hymn he softly sang, of God's good grace."

The Soldier and the Oak, Elliot Park

Christian Education News April 2024

Movie nights, parking lot fundraisers, and more...
We have LOTS of upcoming opportunities!
Don't miss out – join us & get involved!!!



Join us for a family movie night!
WHEN: Saturday, April 20th
WHAT: "Elemental" from Disney Pixar
5:30pm Hot Dogs, Chips, & Drinks – movie at 6pm
ALL AGES ARE WELCOME!!!

Happy Birthday, Pastor Paul –



Thank you for all you do!



We're starting to plan...we'll need all hands on deck!

Stay Tuned
FOR something
AWESOME

FINANCIAL NEWS

February income was \$25,179, compared to projected income of \$28,841. We received \$3,661 less than projected. Expenses were \$29,716, compared to a budget of \$35,948. This resulted in spending \$6,231 less than budgeted. For the month, the church brought in \$4,537 less than we spent.

Year-to-date income is \$55,840, compared to projected income of \$57,757. This resulted in the church receiving \$1,916 less than projected. Expenses were \$65,255, compared to a budget of \$72,414. We have spent \$7,158 less than budgeted. For the year, the church has spent \$9,414 more than we brought in.



Coffee and Cookies on Sunday: Remember that treats and a hot drink on Sunday are appreciated by all. Please take a moment to sign up to bring cookies or some other tasty treat on the Sunday that works best for you. Or sign up to prepare the coffee to give our loyal volunteer Mary Ann Tanis a day off. As requested by some of our new members there is a plan in the works to usually have the final Sunday of the month be a time when we join in the Fellowship Hall. We can sit at a table and chat with someone new while we munch on a treat. Enjoy this experience in April!!

Are you grieving something from a death or something else? It could be any kind of loss, and it hurts. We have a place for you here at Bethlehem on the 3rd Monday of the month from 6:00 to 7:00 in the library. If you have any questions please contact Peggy Burns at 231 392-6913.

Our Care Giving Committee has put up a “Communitas” Board on the wall of our Coat Room! This “BOARD” is needed and helpful for ALL of us! Following is a suggestion of some things YOU and our YOUTH can do to “interact” with the board and other members of our congregation. The purpose of our “Auxilium Communitas” BOARD (Latin for “Community/Congregation Assistance”) is to SHARE our gifts, talents, or skills to others that might be in NEED of something like: Gardening, Organizing, Painting, Raking leaves, Shoveling, Household tasks, Carpentry, Manicures, Pedicures, Companionship, Care giving, etc. - This list is Endless! You never know when YOU will be in need of some extra help personally, in your home or yard – let’s make this “reciprocal” - All ages are Welcome to Help Service our Congregation!

Spotlight on Zeke: So many of us enjoy Zeke’s talents with religious music, but did you know that he plays other kinds of music at various locations in the Traverse City area? Here is a list of his engagements in the next month that are close to TC:

Sat 04/13—Hotel Indigo 6:00pm

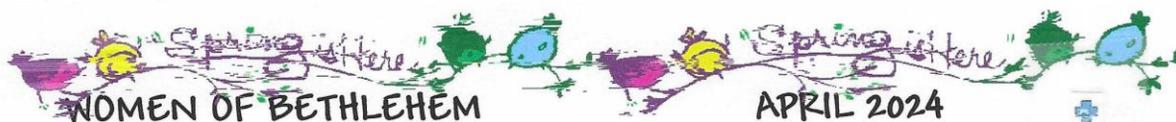




Sumud: For Justice in Palestine and Israel. *Sumud* is an Arabic word meaning “steadfastness.” The term is widely used by Palestinian theologians and others to signify Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands and people. That resistance takes the form of nonviolent advocacy for political change as well as “resistance through existence,” embodied in education, social work, the arts and one’s relationships with the land and community.

This new name – Sumud - re-commits the ELCA to advocacy and awareness-raising grounded in accompaniment of the Palestinian people who are our primary partners in the region, and especially Palestinian Christians, an Indigenous minority community whose ministries of education, health care, social service, justice work, and intellectual and cultural leadership are integral to Palestinian society. Sumud follows the guidance of our Palestinian church partners in updating its name to reflect the truth of the situation on the ground: that only when *justice* prevails in the Holy Land — when the occupation ends and human rights are restored to Palestinians — can there be a true and lasting peace for all Palestinians, Israelis [and everyone in the region and world].

Sumud connects ELCA members to our companions in the Holy Land and seeks to follow the guidance, support the leadership, and amplify the voices of our Palestinian partners. Together with our Lutheran companions, we accompany Palestinians and Israelis, and many other Jews, Christians, and Muslims, in working to establish the justice required for peace.



WELCOME APRIL: Songbirds' joyful music and springtime flowers; colorful umbrellas opened wide for April showers. Days are brighter, hearts are lighter. Promise fills the air. The gifts of April bring us special happiness to share. (bluemountain.com)

SPRING GATHERING: Keep the date of April 27th open for the Synod-wide spring gathering held here at Bethlehem! The theme is prayer; the Bible study will be presented by Sherri Helman. There will be refreshments, craft, worship, fun and fellowship. Please keep an eye out for further information as we get closer. All women of Bethlehem are invited. Questions? Call Nancy Ammann 946-8433

APRIL BIBLE STUDY: Our April Bible study is entitled: "Scripture and nature: Teachers of faith: Food." Our faithful stewardship of the earth includes paying attention to the ways we eat. Written by Sara Olson-Smith. Please join us either on the second Thursday or the third Tuesday of April. Call Nancy Ammann for further information.

Health Concerns*



The Power of Prayer

*Richard Fernholz, Nancy Smith, Tom & Lee Miller,
Margie Whitney, Judy Fenton, Julie Lapeer, Milt & Carol Bowes,
Lynn Hoyt, Tom Woodworth, Ron Hellenga,
John Stretlien, Harper Wiemerslage,
Russ Luttinen, Sherry, Leroy Schlagel,
Roy & Marilyn Dumond, Sean Rivard,
Brenda Denoyer and the Denoyer Family,
Patti McCracken, Sharon Vanmeter, Dale Thiel,
Margaret Hutchison, Carol Collins, Julie,
Patience Lambert, Dale Leider, Julie Barrett,
Jennifer Mowers, Debbie Knopf,
Gail Goldsmith, Jim Rumbach, Kathi Ivany,
John Block, Dan Deutsch, Joann Stepka,
Earl Manuel, Jack McCracken, Marianne*

French Manor South: Brenda Denoyer **Orchard Creek:** Margie Whitney

Evergreen Cottage: Milt & Carol Bowes

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

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

Cindy Monroe, President	president.council@bethlehemtc.org
Paul Wiemerslage, Vice President	vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org
Jana Rockne, Secretary	secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org
Gary Ancinec, Treasurer	treasurer.council@bethlehemtc.org
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Denice Bossardet, Worship and Music	worshipmusic.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Tina Dohm, 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
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters (FH) 9am - Property Work Group	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	5:30pm - ACA		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service(S) 11:15am - Worship and Music	1pm - Finance Cmte.	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters (FH) 9am - Property Work Group 10:45am - Staff Meeting 1pm - Friendship Bible Study 6pm - Y2A/Christian Ed Meeting 6:30pm - Executive Comtee.(CR)	Game Night 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	9am - Baby Pantry Setup 10am - Baby Pantry-FH 1pm - Rebecca Anna Circle - GS 1pm - Rebecca Anna Circle - 5:30pm - ACA	12pm - XYZ	7pm - Contra Dance - Bayside
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Traditional Worship	6pm - Grief Group (Library)	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters (FH) 9am - Property Work Group 12pm - Sarah Circle - Library 6:30pm - Council Meeting - 7pm - Lutheran SG @ at the home	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal	5:30pm - ACA 5:45pm - Third Thursday Meal 7pm - Third Thursday service	STAR articles due today 10am - Sew Pleasant 1pm - Lehto SG - Library	Movie Night
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service(S) 12:30pm - Confirmation Class at	10am - Sustaining Endowment	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters (FH) 9am - Property Work Group 5:30pm - Book/Supper Club	9:30am - Adult Bible Study 11:30am - Music Rehearsal 1pm - Johnson SG (Offsite) 1:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	5:30pm - ACA		9am - WELCA Spring Gathering
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service(S)		Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters (FH) 9am - Property Work Group				



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Special Notice for Future STAR issues (starting in July).
You will NOT be receiving the STAR in the mail unless you have requested it.
Print copies will still be available at church AND digital copies will now be
delivered directly to your email address.

To add your name to the list for mailed copies:
Please contact the office at 231-947-9880 or admin@bethlehemtc.org



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