



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 3pm

<u>Office Hours</u> Monday – Thursday, 9am to 3pm ew lear *

January

2017

Worship Times:

Saturday: Sunday: 5 pm Celebrate! Worship 8:45 am Traditional Worship 9:45 am Education Hr. 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."



Transition, Transition...



What do they say in the realtor's world about "the most important thing" in real estate? ("Location, location, location!") Well, you can say a similar thing about life in the ministry or – more universally, in our journeys of faith together – the most important constant we have is a three-part adage: "Transition, transition, transition."

Yes, I know we all resist change or transition. We cling to the creature comforts of "home," of routine, of stability. Yet everything about the story of God's people speaks the opposite: from humanity leaving the Garden of Eden to seek new understanding amidst our sin (and God's grace); from the Isrealites entering slavery then leaving exile in Egypt; from God's people wandering in the desert, then wondering in the Promised Land; from Jesus' family fleeing to Egypt after he was born, then (2 years later) returning to the Holy Land to grow into the Savior of the nations...only to re-enter Jerusalem for the ultimate transition through death and resurrection into eternity, heaven...and then, someday to return for us all...

All of it is about, you guessed it, transition. We remember these journeys and embark on new beginnings because our faith calls to us, inspires us, nudges us, and sometimes even outright sends us to say goodbye to the "last" things and hello to the "next" things. Goodbye to last year, hello to next. And along the way, we also say goodbye to our wonderful and faithful Music Coordinator, Billie Thompson (at least "officially") this January...Keep alert for the exact time and place of such honoring.

A few words about Billie...Billie is a go-getter, a take-charge person who always tries to "get out ahead" of events, challenges, and joys before they get ahead of us. Personally, I always appreciated Billie's sense of vision and planning. That, of course, and Billie is SO talented musically. From leading the choir years ago, to coordinating all the various musical elements and directors, to pinch-hitting with the creation of Saturday PowerPoint presentations for Celebrate! worship. She has done so much in this community, and she deserves much credit. Please take a moment to give Billie Thompson a big hug, hi-five or other gesture of love and appreciation. Many things at Bethlehem simply would not have happened without her.

So here we are. Transitioning in staff (also into the capable hands of Sharon Weller), a new budget and set of goals and initiatives for 2017, and moving along into the new year as individuals and as a church. What will this year hold? To what scripture can we look to for guidance? The prophet Isaiah perhaps echoed God's abundant (transitional) plans for us in chapter 43, verse 19:

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"

That's the first part of verse 19, and it contains a great question (do we recognize the new transitions among us as at least in-part from God?) Sometimes we miss God's call of transformation and healthy change and renewal amid the noise and haste of life. And the next part of verse 19 is just as good: "I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

These aren't just poetic words, my friends. They are as true as transition's power over and for us: God gives guidance and sustenance, even in the most bewildering or challenging of years, changes or challenges. May we all embrace the "new thing" God is doing for us all in 2017.

Prayers for perceiving them all, with love, together. In peace... - Pr. Paul

To Be A Deacon - exploring the intersections or our world and the church together, with the Trinity leading the way.

"8 And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work."



2nd Corinthians 9:8 NRSV

Happy New Year!

As we are reminded by remembering our baptism, out with the old and in with the new, this phrase connects the New Year with our new life in Jesus through the water and Word of baptism. While there is little to predict about the new, we rest in the Apostle Paul's promise to the Corinthians that "God is able to provide [us] with every blessing in abundance."

We closed out this past year in great celebration of Jesus' Birthday with a birthday party led by the Christian Education Committee, Advent Wednesday discussions, Christmas Eve Worship, and Christmas Day carol sing. Just two days later, a senior high youth and I headed to Lansing for the Living Water Ministry annual Senior High Youth Gathering.

This month we start back up right away with our monthly rotation of committee meetings, youth events (senior high night January 4th), and other happenings. We have a number of fun ministry events planned too. Help support the youth by attending the January 8th Pancake Breakfast! Youth and Families, help work this pancake breakfast! Then at the end of the month, join the BLC Youth, Family, and Friends Ski Day to Crystal Mountain! Thrown in the middle of those events is a January BLUES (Bethlehem Lutheran Upper Elementary Students) Night on the 27th from 5pm - 7pm.

There will be many other ministry opportunities that are already on the calendar or that will pop up, so be sure to tune in to the variety of ways BLC shares news!

Peace. - Deacon Juls ><>



January Star – President's Report 2017

Dear Friends at Bethlehem,

A new year is upon us and the canvas is blank. God invites us to create a new vision of today and the future. He has given us free will to craft our lives and impact those around us, and the environment in which we live. Using His word as a guide, and listening to His whispers, 2017 has the potential to be amazing and filled with the peace and joy that only He can give.

I want to take a moment to thank you, the congregation of Bethlehem Lutheran Church for your support in adopting the 2017 budget. This is our blueprint for the coming year and reflects our commitments to the mission and programs that you support. We will have our challenges in the coming year and we need your financial support to be able to achieve these goals. The small increase in giving by each of you will go far to maintain our programs and growing our outreach to God's people. We also need fresh faces – you – to volunteer your time. Specifically, the Membership and Stewardship Committees need to be reinvigorated now to begin developing strategies to be more effective. Any Council member will be happy to discuss opportunities with you. Please prayerfully consider helping these committees.

The canvas of 2017 is ready for you to create your vision. Our church needs your help and talents. I am reminded of what the Swedish politician, Goran Persson said:

Let our New Year's resolution be this: we will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity, in the finest sense of the word.

Let us be there for one another. Raising each other up just as we raise up our prayers like incense before God.

My hand in yours, our hearts with Him,

Phil Anderson Council President

TREASURER UPDATE

Key Message November Actual Variance Budget Income well above budget !!!!! Total Income 31,716 26,772 4,944 Expense below budget **Total Expenses** 29,906 30,777 -871 Over/Under 1,810 -4,005 **Excellent November**

November monthly numbers for the **<u>General Fund</u>** are shown below.

The narrative for November is a good one. Our income for the month was \$31,716 which was \$4,944 greater than what was budgeted. At the same time our expenses of \$29,906 were \$871 less than budgeted. So November was a great month when compared to budget. The budget anticipated a net deficit of \$4,005 and we ended up with a surplus of \$1,810.

Year To Date numbers thru November 30th for the **General Fund** are shown below.

Year To Date	Actual	Budget	Variance	Key Message
				Actual Income slightly below
Total Income	338,710	339,241	531	budget
Total Expenses	352,253	350,086	2,606	Expense exceeds budget
Over/Under	-13,451	-10,845		Deficit

Actual Total Income thru November is \$338,710. Budgeted income for this same period was \$339,241 so we are close to budget on Income.

Actual Expense for this same period was \$352,253. Budgeted expense for this same period was \$350,086 so we are running high against budget.

These numbers tell us we are tracking close to what was budgeted for 2016, and the budget anticipated this deficit at the end of November. The 2016 budget was passed with an anticipated year end deficit of \$5,602. December is traditionally a good month with Advent and Christmas income exceeding expense. The 2016 budget estimated December would show a surplus of \$4,202 which will help reduce our 2016 deficit. With continued generous December envelop contributions, the deficit number above can be significantly lowered by year end.

The 2017 budget was passed at the December 11th Congregation Meeting. The presentation of the budget explained three key drivers for attaining a balanced budget. Those were...1) Increased giving of \$3,600 (1%), and 2) Increased transfer of \$2,000 from the Challenge Grant from \$4,000 to \$6,000 and 3) a generous gift of stock that will contribute approximately \$4,500 to the General Fund and \$5,000 to mortgage principal reduction.

And lastly, our goal of receiving 100 pledges fell a little short. We ended up matching last year's total of 96. The good news is the average pledge increased from \$2,538 to \$2,585 and the total amount pledged totaled \$248,152. Respectfully submitted, David Peppler



Epiphany – A time to celebrate the revelation of God to humankind in the person of Jesus Christ.

During this season the ELCA emphasizes our engagement through the theology and practice of accompaniment – walking together with our global companions

Constructing churches in Zambia

For members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia, there is great excitement as the church continues to grow and expand. But due to this rapid growth, there are not enough buildings for all the members to worship in. Some congregations must worship outside or in unsafe structures. As part of *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, we have an opportunity to support the construction of 16 churches in Zambia. Learn more about this and other global ministry projects at: http://www.elca.org/en/Our-Work/Global-Church/Global-Church-Sponsorship/Supporting-Global-Ministries.

New missionary in India, the Rev. Gabriele Schroeder

The Rev. Gabriele Schroeder is a new missionary serving in Hyderabad, India, who works at the Henry Martyn Institute. The institute has three primary areas of focus: their academic program, conflict transformation program, and community development program. Their mission and vision is: "Peace as Goal. Justice as Perspective. Reconciliation as Methodology."

'Equipping for service in Perm' – Siberia

The Rev. Bradn Buerkle is an ELCA missionary serving in Russia and is helping lead the Equipping for Service Global Ministry Project in Siberia, which is a part of Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA. Recently, he wrote about a four-day seminar that he helped lead in Perm. Participants in the seminar learned how to live out the Great Commission in their communities.

'Walks with God'

Lexy Johnson is serving as a Young Adults in Global Mission volunteer in Australia and recently wrote a wonderful blog about her morning walks to her work. She reflects on the spiritual practice of walking and praying. She "prays that in the complexities of this world, we may never lose sight of God's presence in and all around us. To know that grace is alive in creation, to be heard, felt and shared."

'Change for Change in South Sudan'

Elmo Lutheran Church is a small congregation 4 miles north of Parkers Prairie, Minn., with an average attendance of 18 people on Sunday. In anticipation of their 130th anniversary next year, the congregation decided to sponsor a missionary. Read about this congregation's generous desire to sponsor the Rev. Wal Reat and the ways this covenant has inspired the congregation to realize how they are connected with one another. See: <u>http://www.elca.org/Campaign-for-the-ELCA/Campaign-Stories/donor_elmo</u>

We are a church that believes God is calling us into the world – together. Walking together we achieve things on a scale and scope that we could never do otherwise.



Ahhh! Christmas is over - now we can get busy with making our New Year's resolutions. Right? If you are like me, those include exercising, dieting/eating right, and so on. The same old resolutions - ones I never manage to keep past the first week or so. Maybe we should forget those resolutions that we never keep for our physical bodies and make a resolution to spend more time with God in prayer, devotions, Bible reading, and worship. This is a resolution that isn't just for our physical well-being but, more importantly for our spiritual well-being - a relationship with the God who created us and who cares enough for us to send his Son to live with us on earth and in our hearts. What could be more important? Our eternity depends on it. Jesus said to be still in His presence so he can strengthen us. Sometimes we think we are too busy to take that extra few minutes to spend with Him but the busier you are, the more you need that time with Jesus.

Wait - let's back up a minute. Did I say Christmas is 'over'? Isn't Christmas something we should celebrate each and every day - just knowing Christ came to earth to fulfill His Father's plan for us? He became one of 'us' so we could learn to be more like Him. It's time we 'make' time for Jesus.



The Circle Bible Study for January is a study written by Kathryn A. Kleinhans on Galatians 1:1-2:21. "Paul explains that we are justified by grace through faith in Christ - an idea central to Martin Luther's understanding of the Christian tradition." Please call Nancy Ammann 946-8433 if you would like to join us. All are welcome.

God's Blessings to you all in this new year!

Nancy Ammann WELCA President

Safe Harbor: Our Ministry to the Homeless, February 4 – 11

BLC will open our doors to provide overnight shelter to homeless men and women from our community beginning Saturday evening February 4 through



Saturday morning February 11. For each of the last four years our ministry to homeless has engaged the hearts and hands of more than 90 volunteers from our church. Please consider how you might serve. Volunteer sign-up will begin January 7. For more information contact Jim Hutchison by phone, 714-6062, or email, hutchison@alma.edu.

Volunteer Duties

Overnight Host: Be present during the night for security and assistance with guests. May sleep in shifts during the night. 8:30 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.

Morning Clean Up: Assist with serving the continental breakfast and clean sleeping areas, bathrooms, and kitchen. 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Facilities Set Up and Clean Up: Duties on Saturday mornings.

February 4 and February 11.

Dinner Preparation: Food preparation and service. 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Small groups, women's and men's groups, or families are encouraged to volunteer. BLC will pay for food.

Grocery Donation: Food items for snacks and breakfast are needed.

Sarah Circle with the Thrivent Action Team requested a a family in need, for which to purchase Christmas gifts, from the Women's Resource Center,. We were one of 200 individuals and groups that supplied families with presents. We have enjoyed donating, shopping, wrapping and delivering presents for this family that would otherwise not have Christmas presents.



Anniversary Time Capsule

When Bethlehem Lutheran Church celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1942, there were 60 adult members and 44 Sunday School children. The Rev. Lavern Anderson traveled from Tustin to serve as vice-pastor, and Mr. Art Heglund served as our intern. Cradle Mothers group organized and began the tradition of putting a single rose upon the altar to announce the birth of babies born to members of the church. An Altar Guild was also formed, and a Flower Box for donations for flowers when it wasn't summer.





Thank you to all who attended the XYZ December lunch and program. A special thanks to Pastor Fred and Ruth Overdier for the wonderful program on Christmas Memories. Many songs and historical memoires were shared : children's programs, long cold car rides in the dark, a tractor going through the ice, candles trees and even hair catching on fire, listening to Christmas programs & Santa on the radio, being sick and or in the hospital, holiday foods, ugly trees and many more thoughts from years ago.

Thank you also to Oleson's Food Stores for the donation of the ham and to Plant Masters of Suttons Bay for the donation of the poinsettia plants.

The January gathering will take place at noon on **THURSDAY**, **January 19th**, the program will be, 'Elder Law' by attorney Deborah Rysso. All are invited to attend, please feel free to invite a friend or neighbor. Questions or comments can be directed to Jan or Butch, 231-271-3802 or etwaisanen@centurytel.net.

The staff of BLC would like to thank the congregation for their very generous Christmas gifts; we appreciate you so very much!

SOME January Events

- 1/4: Senior High Night at 5:30pm
- 1/8 : Winter Rally/Youth Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser beginning before the 8:45am Sunday service.
- ✤ 1/14: SCRAPBOOK Club meets at 10am in the Fellowship Hall; all welcome.
- ✤ 1/15: The Apprentice Series begins its second round at 6:15pm.
- ✤ 1/17: Church Council Meeting at 6pm.
- 1/19: XYZ on THURSDAY, at 12 noon. The program, presented by attorney Deborah Rysso is on Elder Law. All are invited.
- 1/27: B.L.U.E.S. Night, meets at 5:30pm.
- 1/29: Jubilee at 10am, followed by a potluck. All welcome.

Musicality

Another way to support your Bethlehem Music Department is to join one of the music groups. Depending on the one you join, you could be a part of services once every 2 months, once a month, once every three weeks, or about every other week. They all have different schedules. **What fits you best?**

Your choices are steel pans, bells, Worship Team, and choir. They rehearse once a week with trained directors and really build up quite a comradery. It's fun. Think about it.

In honor of Bethlehem's 125 year anniversary the worship and music committee would like to restore the custom of honoring new members of the family of God with a rose on the baptismal font. Those who wish to celebrate their new child or grandchild can contact committee chair, Barbara Oster at: beo6475@yahoo.com or via phone 668-7038. The cost is \$10.00 to be submitted to the church office, or labeled as such and placed in the collection plate. The rose and vase can be taken by the family after the 11:00 service on Sunday.



Book/Supper Discussion Group

We meet from 5 to 7 pm on the 4th Tuesday of the month Join us & if you have any questions, please contact Ellie Long at 935-4595.

Jan. 24 The Japanese Lover by Isobel Allende (novel)

Feb 28 The Wright Brothers by David McCullough (non fiction)

Mar.28 *Dead Wake! The Last Crossing of the Lusitania* by Erik Larson (non-fiction)

April 25 Ordinary Grace by William Kent Krueger (novel)

New Music Co-ordinator

Starting January 1, we welcome Sharon Weller as Bethlehem's Music Co-ordinator. You already know Sharon as the director of the Worship Team, the Celebrate Team, and the Adult Choir. She will wear a lot of hats, so please welcome her with all her talents.



Health Concerns

Jeri Boike, Richard Fernholz, Karen Anderson, Bob Jahnke, Christian Stretlien, Carol Collins, Dan Morley, Margie Whitney, Ava Oleson, Brenda Denoyer, Tom Miller, Thad Hellenga, Hazel Lautner, Dee Springer and Virginia Fleming.

<u>Grand Traverse Pavilions:</u> Walter & Jenni Goff <u>French Manor:</u> Martha LaVire; French Manor/Lafranier: Jo Hasse <u>Culver Meadows AFC:</u> Janet Hinds <u>Cherry Hill Haven:</u> Paul Oppliger <u>Southridge:</u> Jo Hasse <u>Traverse Manor:</u> Juanita Lautner, Jane Witkop, Margie Whitney, Hazel Lautner <u>Boardman Lake Glens:</u> Ingie 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.



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 jstretlen@gmail.net.

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 <u>www.bethlehemtc.org</u>!

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

A Rip-Roarin' Jubilee Coming

Last November you joined in a very traditional high church Jubilee. On January 29 you can now enjoy a modern service with a lot of spice and creativity. It's great to gather to praise God, when the worship is varied. There are <u>many</u> ways to worship God.

Bring your friends (and relatives) for this upcoming adventure worship.

Sunday, January 29, 10a - with potluck following.

BLC Contacts

Church Office

Pastor Paul Busekist Deacon Julia Nelson Diane McWethy, Admin. Asst. Mary Lou Deutsch, Interim Bookkeeper Sharon Weller Website

Church Council

Phil Anderson, President Jim Parkinson, Vice President Tom Rockne, Secretary Dave Peppler, Treasurer Shelly McAllister, Financial Sec. Jan Stretlien, Christian Care Giving Dianne Blair, Christian Ed. Barbara Overdier, Evangelism , Fellowship Barbara Overdier, Membership Leonard Graf, Personnel Carl Lehto, Property _____, Social Ministry _____, Stewardship Barbara Oster, Worship and Music Jodi, Youth/Y2A

paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org julia.nelson@bethlehemtc.org diane.mcwethy@bethlehemtc.org bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org sharon.weller@bethlehemtc.org www.bethlehemtc.org

president.council@bethlehemtc.org vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org treasurer@bethlehemtc.org secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org christiancaregiving.committee@bethlehemtc.org christianeducation@bethlehemtc.org evangelism@bethlehemtc.org fellowship.committee@bethlehemtc.org membershipevangelism.committee@bethlehemtc.org personnel.committee@bethlehemtc.org property.committee@bethlehemtc.org socialministry.committee@bethlehemtc.org stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org worship.committee@bethlehemttc.org youth.committee@bethlehemtc.org

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

Advent Night, Christmas Tea, Christmas Eve, Christmas Tree...

See the 2016 Bethlehem Photo Retrospective playing daily in the Gathering Space. Don't miss seeing yourself & your friends!

































BLC - Non assigned mtg. space, Contacts, Conference Room, Entire BLC, Event Held Outside of BLC, Fellowship Hall, Jan 2017 (Eastern Time)

	Ski Trip @ Crystal 10 am - JubileeWorship	29				11am - Modern	8:45am - Worship-S	22			-		11am - Modern	9:45am - Christian Ed	8:45am - Worship-S	.15				11am - Modern	9:45am - Christian Ed	8:45am - Worship-S	8:30am - WinterRallyPa	8					10am - Worship Service	Happy birthday1	1
6pm - Sew Pieceful 6:15pm - ApprenticeSe 7:30pm - Gambler's	10am - AlAnon-B 11:15am - StaffMeeting	30		7:30pm - Gambler's	6:15pm - ApprenticeSe	5 nm - Sew Pieceful	10am - AlAnon-B	23		7:30pm - Gambler's	7 pm - Monroe SG @	6:15pm - ApprenticeSe	3 pm - Oster SG (C)	11:15am - StaffMeeting	10am - AlAnon-B	16			7:30pm - Gambler's	6:15pm - ApprenticeSe	6pm - Sew Pieceful	11:15am - StaffMeeting	10am - AlAnon-B	6				7:30pm - Gambler's	11:15am - StaffMeeting	10am - AlAnon-B	. 2
9am - Prayer Shawi 9am - Work Group 3pm - LessonsWarne 6:15pm - SteelPansReh	9am - ACOA 9am - LSSM-LWR	31	5pm - Book/Supper	3pm - LessonsWarne	9am - Work Groun	9am - Praver Shawl	9am - ACOA	24	6pm - Council Meeting	5:30pm - Newcomer's	3pm - LessonsWarne	9 am - Work Group	9am - Prayer Shawl	9 am - LSSM-LWR	9am - ACOA	-17	12:30pm - Finance-CR	12pm - Sarah Circle	9am - Work Group	9am - Prayer Shawl	9am - LSSM-LWR	9am - ACOA	8am - EndowmentCom	10	6:30pm - Evang/Membe	6pm - Christian Ed Mtg.	9am - Work Group	9am - Prayer Shawl	9 a m - LSSM-LWR	9am - ACOA	
		1					6pm - Confirmation.	25								18				6pm - Confirmation	10:30am - Stewardship	9:30am - QuiltersByBay	9am - Staff Meeting	11						5:30pm - Senior High	
		•	7:30pm - Choir Reh	6:30pm - Gamblers	6:15pm - RellChoir Reh	5:30pm - ACOA (LR)	9am - Baby Pantry-FH	26	7:30pm - Choir Reh	6:30pm - Gamblers	6:15pm - BellChoir Reh	5:30pm - ACOA (LR)	4:30pm - AAUW Mtg	3pm - LessonsWarne	12pm - XYZ	.19	7:30pm - Choir Reh	6:30pm - Gamblers	6:15pm - BellChoir Reh	5:30pm - ACOA (LR)	3 pm - LessonsWarne	1pm - Rebecca/Ann	9am - Baby Pantry-FH	12			6:30pm - Gamblers	5:30pm - ACOA (LR)	3 pm - LessonsWarne	9 a m - CommMealsProg	
		G				5:30 pm - B.L.U.E.S.	10am - AlAnon-B	27						3:30pm - RehearsalFrSt	10am - AlAnon-B	20				7 pm - Bridge-GS	6pm - Food for Thought	3:30pm - RehearsalFrSt	10am - AlAnon-B	13					3:30pm - RehearsalFrSt	10am - AlAnon-B	8
					-			28				-		-	5 pm - Worship-S	.21	-						5pm - Worship-S	14						5pm - Worship-S	

Because of the many activities here at BLC, this is only a partial calendar. You can view the entire calendar at <u>http://www.bethlehemtc.org/community-calendar</u> or call the office at 947-9880 for more information (and corrections/additions).