

OCTOBER 2021



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880



“Treasured Days, Ceaseless Praise”

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 during worship service
Nursery open during worship service
Parking Lot Communion: 11:00 am

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.”



“So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.’

– Genesis 1:27-28



When reading the above passage from Genesis, I often recall two things: (1) that we are created in God's image (so we are created GOOD) and (2) that we are stewards of God's creation, with "dominion" being productive, and its opposite (domination) being destructive. From the word “go” humans have been called to care for one another and the world God entrusted to us. This world may not be ours, but we are its stewards. And this is the time of year we reflect upon that caretaking, caregiving role. Enter, our fall 2021 stewardship campaign for the year 2022.

This year, we are calling our stewardship campaign **“Treasured Days, Ceaseless Praise,”** based in large part on a popular song and hymn in our ELW hymnal – “Take My Life, That I May Be.” There are two versions, one more traditional (#685) and the other more contemporary (#583). But, with the exception of one, the verses are exactly the same. Each verse celebrates a different part of our bodies and the Body of Christ - our hands, feet, and voices (verses 1 and 3); our earthly treasures and God-given gifts like silver, gold and “intellect” (verse 2); and finally our very wills and hearts (verse 4). Yet each verse cycles back to perhaps our most valuable gift ever – our time. “Take my moments and my days,” writes the modern-day psalmist, “let them flow in ceaseless praise.



We haven't had a "Stewardship STAR" in a couple years. The pandemic put so much on hold - in our churches, communities and relationships. Precautions and dangers were real, and still are, but now we anxiously move forward with excitement, hope and reflection. Two years ago to the month we had begun working with both ELCA Pastor Adam from New York and Pr. David Sprang from our bishop's office to begin a new sense of vision for Bethlehem. **It is time we ask you all to please help us continue our current ministry with your time, talents, and (yes) treasure. And it is time to begin our visioning process again,** while also celebrating how far we have come, now that our previous 10-year vision from 2012 is approaching its twilight. **Let's take a brief look at how far we have come together:**

- **In 2012, we said we wanted to make Youth and Young Adult (“Y2A”) Ministry a priority.** We launched the “Y2A Search Committee” in 2013 and have been blessed with full-time or near-full-time Youth and Outreach Directors ever since. Yes, some of them moved on to follow their dreams (e.g. Melissa, becoming a senior pastor in Maryland; Alexis, joining Young Adults in Global Mission), but Annie has more than carried the torch and continues to do wonderful ministry at Bethlehem.
- **In 2012, we said we wanted to make worship more lively and diverse.** In late 2013, we also launched the VIEWorship (i.e. “Vibrant & Inspiring Experience of Worship”) Task Force and created more diverse music, installed new sound equipment with projector and confidence screen, prioritized not only traditional but contemporary/modern worship, and purchased a new baby grand piano in 2017. In 2020 we also added virtual/online worship for Sundays and Wednesdays on a regular basis, and this year we added and a new staff position – Media & Tech Specialist (Cassidy White) – to complement and augment our ministry.

- **In 2012, we said we wanted to enliven our experience of discipleship.** We established an “Enlivening Christian Discipleship” Task Force in 2014 which helped pioneer new ideas like Wednesday night fellowship (now replaced by virtual “2.0” worship on Wednesdays), “Verse ONTAP” (a partnership with TC Presbyterian which continued until COVID), and you might say was the inspiration for some of our ongoing bible and book studies, which are far more accessible to enliven participants from home, as many of those offerings are now available via Zoom.
- **In 2012, we said we wanted to make Bethlehem a “Campus at the Crossroads.”** Each year since, we have opened our doors for new ministries like the Grand Traverse Baby Pantry (ongoing) and a Health and Wellness Fair (fall of 2018); hosted existing ministries like Safe Harbor and anonymous support groups; offered office space to Samaritas (ongoing); and provided valuable and economical meeting space for community building organizations like New Comers, American Association of University Women, two Driver’s Education programs, the Bethlehem Nursery School and an annual Craft Show to support local artists. We have even hosted a “Living Last Supper” and created a collaborative ministry site for our “Blue Christmas” service each year since 2015 with pastors from all over the area. This year, a new Food Pantry kiosk is beginning at BLC.
- **In 2012, we said we wanted to prioritize “Creation Care and Outdoor Ministry.”** For many years, we have supported our synod’s outdoor ministry sites (MichiLuCa and Stony Lake) by sending our youth to camp and often invited their leaders to help us lead Vacation Bible School. BLC also planted over 125 trees in the Brown Bridge Quiet Area in 2017 to celebrate our 125th anniversary. Pastor Paul’s office has been 100% powered by solar energy (in the sunny months) since 2017, and our trailhead kiosk in the Gathering Space is, too. We also dedicated a Sacred Grounds garden in the east green space of Bethlehem this past summer, in partnership with the Au Sable Institute and National Wildlife Federation, and we continue to have amazing members garden and tend our “campus” each week.

What is next for our 2022 vision and beyond? Stay tuned, as we begin to plant new seeds of imagining a new vision... For now: we reflect, then explore. More to come! *(Pr. Paul & Your Stewardship Committee)*

A word from the President...

Fall in the church has been a time for Stewardship and looking at the fiscal budget for the next year. We also reflect on what has been taking place this year financially and changes that may need to be made. We are still doing very well with the income from those who have made a pledge commitment in 2021. Expenses have also been held in check which has helped. A pledge commitment makes the budget process much easier.

Another item that supported the budget in 2021 was the Federal Payroll Protection Plan loan. A number of ELCA congregations applied for and received this loan. Documentation of the requirements to forgive this loan are now done. The PPP loan was at no cost to us. This will not be the case for such a PPP loan in 2022. We will be on our own.

As we go through the annual fall Stewardship drive look around your congregation. Check out the live stream. Celebrate your neighbor. Put on a smile even if it is under a mask! Please consider making a pledge commitment. The ministry at Bethlehem goes on even with a pandemic around us!

Mark McPherson

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Traverse City Michigan

“We journey with God to serve with love”

MINUTES TO CHURCH COUCIL MEETING: August 17, 2021

CALL TO ORDER: Maureen Bauer, Vice President, Acting President in Mark's absents called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER: Gail Goldsmith, read verse Deuteronomy 6:16 and the Daily Devotion from Faith Alone.

ROLL CALL: Gail Goldsmith, Secretary; Maureen Bauer, Denice Bossardet, Pastor Paul Busekist, Scott Farley, Gail Goldsmith, Leonard Graf, Laura Hahn, Jim Hinds, Cindy Monroe, Jim Monroe, Paul Wiemerslage were all present. Mark McPherson had an excused absents.

VISITOR/S OR CONGREGATIONAL COMMENT: no visitors were present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Cindy Monroe made the motion to approve the agenda with additions, Leonard Graf seconded the motion, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM July 20, 2021: Leonard Graf made the motion to approve the minutes with corrections, Cindy Monroe seconded the motion, the motion carried.

REPORTS:

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Maureen Bauer, Vice-President gave an update on her activities with Personnel committee; 1.) Maureen checked in with Rebecca Eaton, Administrative Assistant and she stated she loves the job and it was the best thing to happen to her in a long time. 2.) Maureen has 3 applications and she and Pastor Paul have 2 meetings tomorrow for the Media Tech position. 3.) She has had 2 applicants for Music Director, but neither met the standards for the director job. She will review the wording in Indeed online employment agency. 4.) She will be doing interviews with Bethlehem staff in September about their current jobs.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Pastor Paul reports 1.) He is thankful for the renewal time, it helped him to reboot and feel like a leader again. He had felt like he was spinning plates all of the time. This allowed for movement away from a Covid-driven philosophy of “online excellence” into “continued online and in-person presence and greater relational engagement.” (For pastor and for the church.) It also gave him time for reflection which is crucial-each day, week and always (“rolling stone gathering no moss” is no longer sustainable.)

2.) the need for visioning work to resume after a brief period of “pause” and perhaps a little “reflection” (Sunday School and worship time “trial period” will give us a perfect time to do that.) Acronym for discernment, he will share with the congregation, but doesn't want to publish now (so that it's fresh). The Stewardship campaign needs to start in September and get a jump on finances and inspiring in a new way for a new future.

3.) Time of discernment and reinventing of pastor parallels that of the people and congregation: what will emerge that is positive, strong and uniting for the body of Christ post-Covid and post-2021? a.) “Big Picture, Big Purpose” with Dawn Trautman. b.) Paying for some Renewal and Continuing Education (without requesting new funds in 2021...using 2 weeks late this year for continued process of renewal, organizing, discernment and growth). c.) A future project to tap into creativity of the pastor and outreach to community and congregation is in the works... perhaps even as a joint effort. d.) invitation

for new blog by staff, volunteer and (yes) council on an abbreviated level: Goal of "Paths of Hope" is to re-engage the people with image of renewal...even if one entry/year (council) or one entry/month (staff and volunteers).

4.) Realizing the power of our virtual outreach, not the expense of in-person or leaving behind as simply a mean and end: a.) a closer look at the virtual numbers from Jim Monroe and what Pastor may have come up with (including "2.0" "Bible Stories", etc. b.) Stewardship "ask" on line. c.) and new live interactions on Wednesdays?

TREASURER'S REPORT: Leonard Graf, Treasurer reported July expenses were up to \$6400 more than normal due to as there were property taxes on the rental house of \$3784 and 3 pay periods for another \$3000.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: Jim Monroe, Financial Secretary 1.) Completed an in depth report on attendance in church over the last 1 ½ years with pre COVID, Greenspace, Virtual, Indoor and Parking Lot communion. There were many months of large attendance at the virtual service or the combination of services offered. 2.) Jim has worked on updating the council emails. 3.) Contributions are up in July, and tend to be up in August. This year there are 5 Sundays in August. 4.) Jim also discussed COVID numbers are climbing again and people are taking more precautions wearing masks and social distancing. The discussion is to have booster shots for those with weakened immune systems at 8 months from their second vaccine. 5.) We will need to watch for the 14 day rolling positivity rate to see if the church will have to take precautions.

CONSENT CALENDAR: COMMITTEE REPORTS: The committee reports are; Treasurer's report; Financial Secretary's report; Financial and Executive Committee report; Christian Care; Fellowship; Membership and Evangelism; Personnel; Property; Stewardship, Scott Farley has not met with his committee, but will be meeting to start the Stewardship process in September; Worship and Music; Youth/Y2A, Paul Wiemerslage is heading up the Youth/Y2A while Annie is out on maternity leave. They have decided to postpone the Chili Cook Off, scheduled for October to wait until sometime in 2022; Endowment Fund (quarterly); and Sustaining Endowment Memorial Fund (quarterly). All reports are submitted and on file.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Sunday School/Service Ad Hoc Committee: Paul Wiemerslage made the motion to have an Ad Hoc committee to meet with parents of Sunday School Students and Christian Education staff to determine how to move forward with Sunday School. This is to determine when Sunday School will start back up and how it will be scheduled along with the Worship Service. Cindy Monroe Seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- B. Tech/Music Director: Interviews are in process. The Personnel Committee Chairperson and President of council can provisionally hire these positions to be accepted by council at the next Council Meeting.
- C. Food Pantry: The Food Kiosk is in place next to the kitchen door. There is money left from the Trapp Grant to purchase some items for the Food Kiosk.
- D. Ice Cream Social: A Thrivent grant will be used to make door hangers to place around the neighborhoods about the ice cream social and the food kiosk and sacred ground garden. The roll out date is September 12th.
- E. Sacred Ground garden: Paul Wiemerslage has the sign for the garden and Leonard Graf will make sure the sign is in the garden by September 12th for the dedication.

- F. Covid concerns: Reminder from April Council meeting: To look at the 14 Day Rolling Positivity Rate in Grand Traverse County for COVID-19 numbers on Thursday to determine the amount of people in the sanctuary for Sunday Worship:

Positivity Rate for Grand Traverse Co.	# in Sanctuary	# in Fellowship Hall	# in Gathering Space
-7%	100	60	10
-10%	60	60	10
-13%	40	40	10

If there is greater than 13% Rolling Positivity Rate the council will discuss further action.

Cindy Monroe made the motion to have a sign on the door to encourage masking even for vaccinated people, and masks required for non-vaccinated people. Denice Bossardet seconded the motion, the motion carried.

- G. Check Signers: Leonard Graf made the motion to have President, Vice President and Treasurer as check signers. Paul Wiemerslage seconded the motion and the motion carried
- H. Anne Franco's belongings: Leonard Graf made the motion to send an email to Anne with a follow up letter to have her remove her belongings from the closet at the end of the hallway by August 25, 2021, her belongings out of the classroom on the left (the one with windows) by September 1, 2021 and the classroom on the right by September 8, 2021. Gail Goldsmith, Council Secretary will write the letter. Denice Bossardet seconded the motion, the motion carried. Nancy Ammann would like to have access to the room on the left by the weekend of September 12th for Sunday School.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Creation Care event: The Bishop has asked Bethlehem Lutheran Church to have a Creation Care Event during the worship service the 1st Sunday in October. It will most likely be an outdoor service as that is usually the blessing of the animals also.
- B. 2022 Budget Process: Leonard Graf, Treasurer would like to have the 2022 Budget Process start early to have the budget to the congregation in December. By the end of October the Stewardship Committee should have the pledge information to the Financial Secretary and the Bookkeeper should have his information to the Financial Secretary. The committees should have their budget requests to the Treasurer by October 1st. There should be Temple Talks starting soon so the information about pledging can go out early. This will be on the Website so non-members can pledge also, as there have been non-members watching the Live Stream and virtual Services,
- C. Baby Gift for Baby Caleb: Maureen Bauer suggested having people from the congregation who would like to give a gift drop it off at the church and they can be delivered to Annie, Trent and baby Caleb. It was suggested to do gift cards for the family.
- D. Members (who have not been attending church) be removed from the rolls: Cindy Monroe made the motion to take Mike/Anne Rivard and Ramsey/Jessica Hengartner off the membership rolls, since no response to several attempts to contact them. Leonard Graf Seconded the motion, the motion carried. Discussion: Alan/Dianne Blair and Kim Mende have requested to be on "inactive" status. Members requesting to be removed from membership are Ryan/Erin Freye and Jody/Lisa Taylor Brown.

E. Adding New Members to the rolls: Cindy Monroe made the motion to have Marilyn/John Halstead, Rena/David Rudkin, Clark Rasmussen and Jason Nellist be accepted as new members. Paul Wiemerslage seconded the motion, the motion carried.

VISITOR OR CONGREGATIONAL COMMENTS: no comments.

GOOD TO THE ORDER: A time for general/undocumented comments by each Council Member, if so desired.

LORD’S PRAYER: lead by Pastor Paul, said by all.

ADJOURNMENT: at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Goldsmith,

Council Secretary

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### **FINANCIAL NEWS**

August income was \$32,993 compared to budgeted income of \$31,001 for a plus of \$1,992. Expenses were \$28,366 compared to budget of \$31,800 resulted in spending \$3,435 less than budgeted. On a cash basis income exceeded expenses by \$4,628.

Year to date income was \$232,006 compared to budgeted income of \$253,785 for a shortage of \$21,778. Expenses were \$238,928 compared to budget of \$254,535 resulted in spending \$15,607 less than budgeted. On a cash basis expenses have exceeded income by \$6,922. Therefore over the eight months of this year, BLC fel short of covering expenses by \$6,922.

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GIVING STATEMENTS AVAILABLE

Your individual giving statements are will be available in your mailbox in the Narthex beginning October 7, 2021. The statement covers giving from January through September 2021. Please pick them up at your convenience. To save on postage, I will mail out the ones not picked up by the end of October. Thank you for your generous support for the programs and ministries of your church even during these uncertain times.

Your Bookkeeper

ABRIDGED WITH ANNIE: A SUMMARY OF YOUTH EVENTS FOR OCTOBER...

I'm baaaaack Bethlehem! I've missed you all so much and am so glad to be back with you all! There is a lot going on this month for our Youth so let's dive right in, shall we?

OCTOBER HAPPENINGS ...

The **Junior High Youth Group** will meet at **Jacob's Corn Maze on Wednesday October 13th at 5PM** for Cider, Donuts a Devotion and a corn maze adventure! Now, depending on when Caleb decided to make his grand entrance into the world I may or may not still be on maternity leave at this point. If I am, please contact Martin Graf for more information on Junior High Night this month. If you are not sure...reach out to the admin desk and they will let you know my return date!



The **High School Youth Group** will meet at **Bethlehem on Saturday, October 23rd** for a **spooktacular Halloween party** and special devotion! Now, depending on when Caleb decided to make his grand entrance into the world I may or may not still be on maternity leave at this point. If I am, please contact Meghan or Sarah Denton for more information on High School Night this month. If you are not sure...reach out to the admin desk and they will let you know my return date!

The **BLUES Youth Group** will meet at **Bethlehem on Friday, October 29th** for a **Halloween party** with fun costumes, games and we'll even be making Halloween Cards for our shut ins! I will definitely be back from maternity leave at that time, so please reach out to me with any questions or concerns!

Confirmation Classes this month will take place on **Sunday, October 3rd** and **Sunday, October 17th** at Bethlehem and Feast of Victory respectively. Please reach out to Pastor Paul for more information if you need it.

Unfortunately, **our annual Chili CookOff Fundraiser** which had been scheduled for Sun October 31st has been cancelled by the BLC Council. We hope to be able to reschedule sometime in the future.

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

As we go into October, I ask that you keep Bethlehem's youth and their families in your prayers as they continue the school year. That they continue to grow and learn and enjoy all that God has graced them with!

Cheerfully in Christ,

Annie Slabaugh

Director of Youth and Outreach, Bethlehem Lutheran Church – Traverse City

Choir news:

The choir hopes to continue singing one time per month on weekends when the majority of singers are in town. If you are interested and have not already been contacted by Cindy Monroe, please leave her a voice or text message at 231 631-0887 or send an email cmonroe@chartermi.net



The BLC community pantry has been the wish of a BLC member who chooses to remain anonymous. Through his gentle coaxing your current council decided that the time was right for BLC to have its own pantry due to its unique location. A sturdy cupboard has been purchased, assembled and placed outside the kitchen door thru a grant from the Trapp family. A huge thank you to everyone who has donated so generously. Please keep the pantry in mind whenever you are shopping special deals at your favorite store. If you can get 2 for the price of one, and really don't need an extra, please bring it to church. There will always be a blue container under the giving table by the mailboxes where you can place your extra items.



On September 26th we welcomed:

Clark Rasmussen sponsored by Jim Hinds

Jason Nellist sponsored by Shelly Nellist

We look forward to welcoming:

Marilyn and John Halstead (sponsored by Ron and Marilyn Dork) to be received on 10/31

Pecans have been ordered based on the pre-orders we received. We will have a few left of the cases that we ordered for the Dark Chocolate Pecans, Caramel Clusters and the Plain Pecans. The Cinnamon Glazed pecans are sold out. If you are interested in any of the remaining pecans, please contact Barbara Oster at 231-668-7038 or beo6475@yahoo.com. The bags are \$12 each and are perfect for holiday gifts, hostess gifts or just plain munching. Delivery should be in mid to late November.



Y2A News: Our next fundraiser, a Chili CookOff, was planned for October 31st. Council had this event on their agenda in August, and they determined the Chili CookOff be cancelled. Hopefully, things will improve in the future, and we will still be able to hold this popular event.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

ART & CRAFT SHOW

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2021

9:00a.m. – 3:00p.m.

1050 Peninsula Dr.,

Traverse City, Mi. 49686

**Featuring 50 local & original
Handcrafted artists and Crafters**

STAR and Bulletin Deadlines

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

STAR: by the third Wednesday of the month
Bulletin: by the Wednesday before each weekend

Submission by email is preferred (admin@bethlehemtc.org) with either the word STAR or Bulletin in the subject line. Please write exactly what you want in the article or announcement. Be sure to include all pertinent information about your event, i.e. dates, time, location, etc. You can put it in the body of the email or as an attachment as a Word doc or .pdf. Also, please include the month(s) for the STAR issue or the date(s) for the Bulletin issue that you need your article or announcement included. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Oster when she works in the office on Mondays.

Also note that if you want an announcement on the weekly PowerPoint, please send to annie.slabaugh@bethlehemtc.org.

BLC Book club continues to meet the 4th Tues of the month on ZOOM. The book selection for October is *Virgil Wander* by Leif Enger. That author was the first to come to Traverse City many years ago when a program was started for everyone in Michigan to be reading the same book. His book that time was 'Peace Like a River'. We will meet by ZOOM at 5:30 on Tuesday Oct 26. If you are not already on the list for the Zoom meeting you can send your email to cmonroe@chartermi.net.



A big thank you to all who turned in their Olesons' receipts to Bethlehem. We just received a check from them for \$179.90. So far this year, we have received \$435.52 total from Olesons' receipts. Please continue to turn in your Olesons' receipts to Bethlehem. Thanks again.

There are two Bible studies on Wednesdays – both are studying the Gospel of Matthew. One is from 9:00am-11:00am in the Youth Room here at BLC. Barbara Graf is the leader. The second one is from 1:30pm—3:00pm and is held through Zoom. For information on how to access that study, please contact Pr Paul.

Christian Education News

October 2021



SUNDAY SCHOOL IS BACK!!!

We are having Sunday School lessons during the 10am service starting 9/19/2021. Students are dismissed just before the Gospel and return to celebrate Communion with their families.

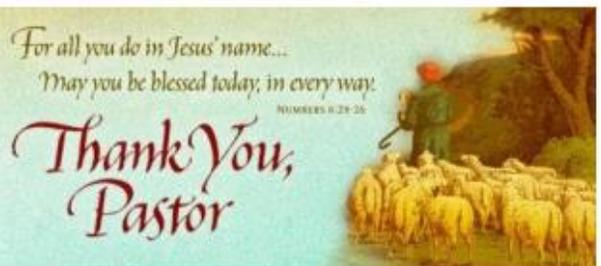


Please join us 😊

Sunday School has resumed classes for our children during the worship service, but we need help to continue this important ministry for our littlest members! Lessons are easy to implement with very simple scripts, and the time commitment can be as little as just once a month! Do you hear the voice of Jesus calling you to serve? Please prayerfully consider this opportunity, and contact the Christian Education Committee for more information.



October: Pastor Appreciation Month



We thank Pastor Paul for his continued service and dedication to BLC throughout the COVID-19 pandemic!
-Christian Education Committee

WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM

OCTOBER 2021



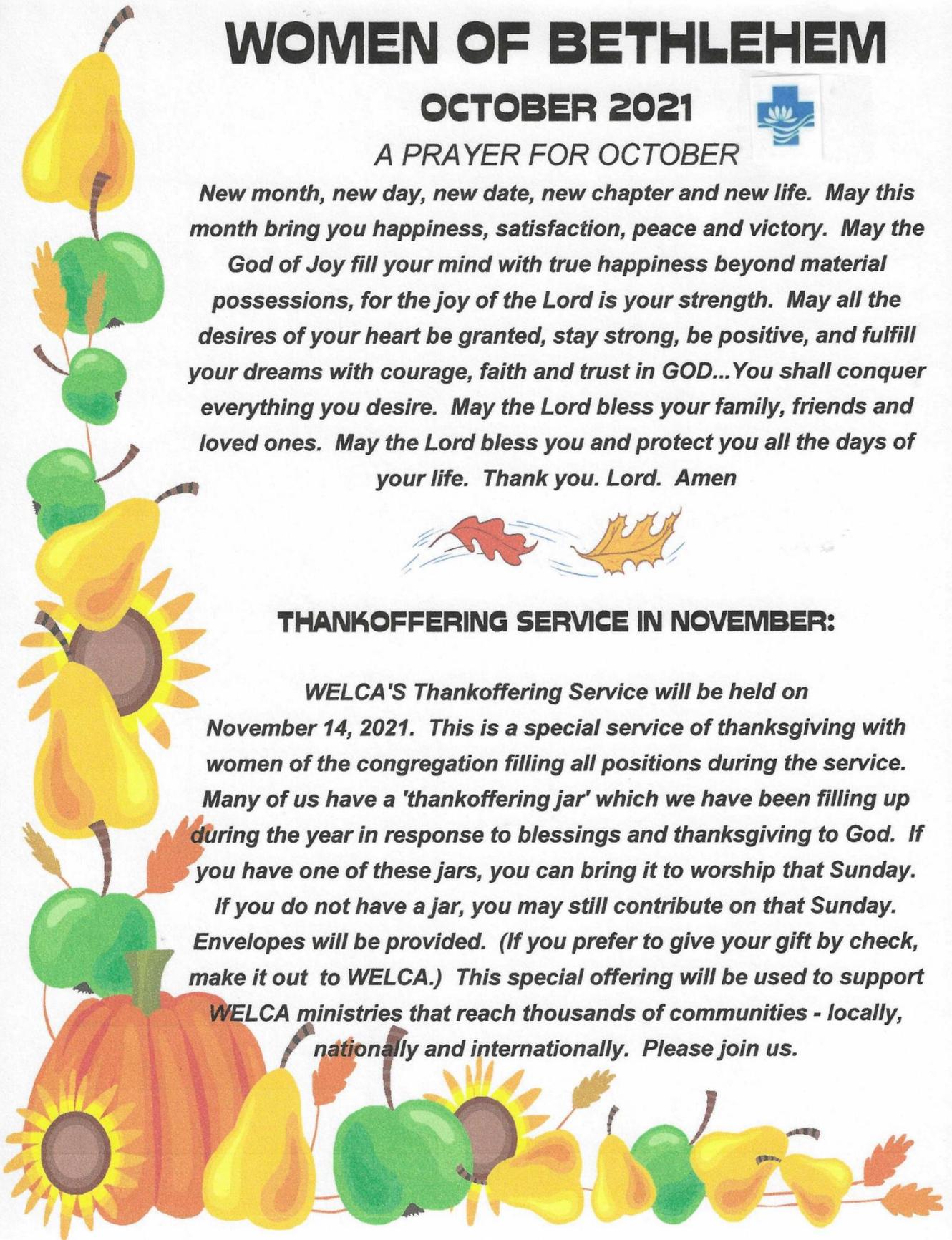
A PRAYER FOR OCTOBER

New month, new day, new date, new chapter and new life. May this month bring you happiness, satisfaction, peace and victory. May the God of Joy fill your mind with true happiness beyond material possessions, for the joy of the Lord is your strength. May all the desires of your heart be granted, stay strong, be positive, and fulfill your dreams with courage, faith and trust in GOD...You shall conquer everything you desire. May the Lord bless your family, friends and loved ones. May the Lord bless you and protect you all the days of your life. Thank you. Lord. Amen



THANKOFFERING SERVICE IN NOVEMBER:

WELCA'S Thankoffering Service will be held on November 14, 2021. This is a special service of thanksgiving with women of the congregation filling all positions during the service. Many of us have a 'thankoffering jar' which we have been filling up during the year in response to blessings and thanksgiving to God. If you have one of these jars, you can bring it to worship that Sunday. If you do not have a jar, you may still contribute on that Sunday. Envelopes will be provided. (If you prefer to give your gift by check, make it out to WELCA.) This special offering will be used to support WELCA ministries that reach thousands of communities - locally, nationally and internationally. Please join us.





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

ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

Evangelism is Alive in Malawi, Africa - - -

In spite of COVID-19, ministry continues. Those are the words from Evance Mphalasa, a pastor and acting general secretary of the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi** (ELCM). These words that have energized him and a team of evangelists as they spread the gospel despite the setbacks of the pandemic.

Pastors hosted two, three, even four services each Sunday to accommodate the small-gathering restrictions. To further share the gospel, evangelists organized a van equipped with loudspeakers so they could preach and sing to people in their homes.

The van carried the praise team singing group, going to different areas, reaching out to different people. This was done during the evenings when people are in their homes. Many first-world countries turned to social media to continue faith conversations and stay connected to parishioners, but Malawians lacked that luxury.

Equal in God's Kingdom

Cholita Narzary made history in November 2020 as the second woman ordained into ministry by the **Bodo Evangelical Lutheran Church** (BELC) in **Assam, India**. Bishop Ichahak Muchahary credits the ELCA-organized 2019 South East Asia Conference of Gender Justice in Hyderabad, India, for pushing him and other leaders to advocate for and implement gender justice shifts within the church.

Since entering a formal companion relationship with the BELC in 2018, the ELCA has accompanied the church with mutual encouragement and leadership training events and funded community development, disaster response and academic scholarships.

Bishop Muchahary said Narzary's ordination has paved the way for the BELC to ordain more women. Pastor Narzary hopes that many qualified and ordained women will take leadership positions in the BELC. "Women have always been in the forefront of Jesus' ministry," she said. ... "Now, after experiencing the work that women are also capable of, the church will open the door for other women too."

Content in these articles is from *Stories of Faith in Action: 2021-2022*.

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Ice Cream Social - God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday



Health Concerns*



The Power of Prayer

*Richard Fernholz, Nancy Smith, Tom & Lee Miller,
Margie Whitney, Ellie Tacke, Arminda Garfield,
Priscilla Thompson, Julie LaPeer, Dirk,
Alvin Kober, Lynn Hoyt, Logan Goodson,
Jan Waisanen, Molly Eastman, John Stretlien,
George Ammann, Russ Luttinen, Sherry,
Roy & Marilyn Dumond, Shawn Rivard, Brenda Denoyer,
Betty Evans, Patti McCracken, Jeffrey Hentschel,
Robert & Carman Waters, Sharon Vanmeter*

Traverse Manor: Margie Whitney

Boardman Lake Glens: Inge Thomas, Bill & Dee Springer

Samaritas (Acme): Priscilla Thompson

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

BLC's PRAYER CHAIN is always seeking partners in prayer.

More volunteers are needed for this crucial ministry.

For more information or to set the Prayer Chain in motion, call Jan Stretlien @ 947-3265 or email jstretlien@gmail.com

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

Are you checking for the latest BLC updates at: 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...

BLC Contacts

PLEASE NOTE SEVERAL ADDRESS UPDATES

Church Office

Pastor Paul Busekist paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org
Admin. Asst. Rebecca Eaton admin@bethlehemtc.org
Admin. Aide Barbara Oster admin@bethlehemtc.org
Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org
, Music Director
Annie Slabaugh, Youth & Outreach Director annie.slabaugh@bethlehemtc.org
Website www.bethlehemtc.org

Church Council

Mark McPherson, President president.council@bethlehemtc.org
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WELCOME BACK to all
who feel comfortable!!!😊

Shalom, and do not be afraid.



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