

JANUARY 2020



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880



Website: www.bethlehemtc.org
Email: bethlehem@bethlehemtc.org

Building Hours:
Monday – Thursday, 9am to 3pm

Office Hours
Monday – Thursday, 9am to 3pm

Worship Times:

Saturday: 5 pm Celebrate! Worship
Sunday: 8:30 am Traditional Worship
9:45 am Education Hour
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.”



In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

***'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight."'***

- Matthew 3:1-3



Friends in Christ... Christmas, New Years and Epiphany blessings to you!

This year, I wanted to start things off with a flurry... not of snow, but with a sense of new beginnings and wonder into the future. For one, I will be venturing into the unknown for an early continuing education trip out west this winter. But before I share that new beginning, I want to explore the concept of **sustainability in 5 different themes** as we "prepare the way" for the new year together:

1.) A Season of Renewal... What if we learned from our fall stewardship campaign how to approach all types of contributions more sustainably?

Last fall's stewardship campaign at Bethlehem was the most responsive I have seen in my 8½ years as your pastor. **The biggest reason for that success is your generosity**, and I'm confident that I can speak for the leadership by saying many, many thanks to all of you for stepping up and closing the gap on our budget moving forward. To say "we could not have done it without you" would be an understatement.

Perhaps the second-biggest ingredient for that success was that Council and the Finance, Executive and Stewardship Committees together laid out very clearly what we needed for the coming year, why we needed that help, and how we would need to adjust if we did not meet our goals for 2020. My guess is you will see more of that transparency moving forward. But **clarity in our needs could also be met with clarity in our resources** and how we look at growing and building up ministry and new leaders alike – through specialized grants, leadership development and new partnerships - to name a few. I wonder if 2020 might be the year we turn the corner on something bolder... and yes, more sustainable... beyond our traditional contribution model. I have added "renewed and more inclusive stewardship" to my prayer concerns for this coming year, my friends.

2.) A Season of Discernment... What if our emerging vision and mission continued its fall 2019 momentum in more sustainable fashion into 2020?

Also at the December 17th Council meeting, Council voted to build upon our visioning process from last fall by partaking in the next group of 4 or 5 congregations gathering this spring with our synod's "REVIVE" program. Materials for REVIVE were previously made available in the sanctuary and the table outside the office last fall and are now available on the Bethlehem download page (www.bethlehemtc.org/downloadpage).



As we move forward, you can be sure that our Bethlehem Visions Committee will faithfully steward the tasks of selecting (with your help) the 4 representatives from Bethlehem that will serve as Bethlehem's delegates (i.e. the pastor + 3 lay people) and coordinate with BLC and our visioning "cohort partners" to learn and walk through this journey together.

I am excited that we have taken on this new and collaborative way of visioning forward. This both inspires us to be reflective and build up new leaders in our midst. Truly revive-ing!

3.) A Season of Transition... What if the leadership and configuration of our weekly worship* became more sustainable?

At the December 17th Council meeting, Bethlehem approved the creation of a “Worship Renewal Task Force” whose main charge was to look at the way we staff our worship (*mostly Saturdays) and see if there might be ways we could put less pressure on the pastor and current worship staff for a regular worship schedule. For the almost four years since our son was born, my family has tried to faithfully and lovingly grapple with the history of our worship configuration. By that, I mean that our 3 service, 2 worshipping days per weekend framework was created in a different era, when Bethlehem was a lot larger and had multiple pastors. Our new task force has been assembled and has met once already in early January. To be clear, the initial thought would not be to *do away with Saturday worship at all*, but to re-examine it and how we staff and configure it. And by the time you read this January STAR, the task force may already have a thoughtful way of engaging with the Saturday worshippers soon to discover what their biggest concerns are during this process. By that time we may even have a few ideas to start the conversation with– a way that can hopefully both sustain our spirits and keep our leaders from spreading themselves too thin. I like to say at Bethlehem that “we do a lot with what we’ve got”... and that has always been true. Now the question is this: Can we do what we do... better?

4.) A Season of Preparation, Part I... Sustainable Wandering/Wondering:

All this talk of “doing,” however, might best be balanced with simply “being.” God says in Psalm 46 “Be still and know that I am God.” For me, that often takes place in the wilderness... literally. And I have been anxious since Day One at Bethlehem to take others into some of the more remote areas of God’s Creation, safely, to be surrounded by God’s handiwork in new ways.



At the end of January, I will be heading out to Arizona to become proficient in **Wilderness First Responder (WFR)** care. It’s something I have always wanted to do, something that (to be honest) intimidates me (just a little), and something I have wanted in my skill set for leading others onto the off-the-beaten paths of God’s Creation. This intensive 10-day, all-day “WooFeR” course will be held at the **National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)** of the **Southwest** facility outside of Tucson, and it will equip me to care for people in remote settings, with various levels of injury. While it will not make me a doctor, it will help provide peace of mind for me, and for others, in future adventures. Unlike my previous continuing education outings, this course may seem less directly spiritual in nature. But I would pose that this is very spiritual for me, and will allow me to share my outdoor joy, more sustainably, with you.



So I am thankful for this opportunity to build such skills of wilderness shepherding. You can also expect to see a retreat or camping outing planned in the near future. My only regret about this winter class is that it takes place at the same time as BLC’s participation in Safe Harbor this year. I will be thinking of you...

5.) A Season of Preparation – Part II... “Desert Highway: Deliver Us...”

My last “sustainability” theme is the season we are ramping up to: Lent, an arduous spiritual journey where we ask for God to sustain us and prepare us for Jesus’ passion and our deliverance. This year we build upon our Lent 2019 “Passion of Jesus, Wilderness of Faith” focus for a sequel of sorts: “Desert Highway: Deliver Us...” We will once again use materials from our friends at the Lutheran Hour Ministries in St. Louis for the Lenten devotional, with a different twist. On Wednesday Lent nights and Sunday mornings during Adult Ed., we will focus on the movie “Last Days in the Desert” (2016) – a wonderful and creative portrayal of Christ’s temptations in the 40 days after his baptism, as he prepares to gather his disciples and begin his “formal” ministry. May God sustain us always as we move from celebrating the Christ child to following the “grown-up” Savior to the cross, “delivered” from sin and death! -Pr. Paul

President's Corner

January 2020

Happy New Year Everyone!

BLC is starting the new year in a very positive way. All of you in the Congregation have overwhelmingly responded to our financial concerns by eliminating our deficit in 2019 with additional contributions and pledged to eliminate our \$21,600 deficit in 2020. I have no words large enough to express my appreciation for your caring and generosity. Your Church Council, Finance Committee and Stewardship Committee worked very hard on your behalf. Additionally, there were a lot of sleepless nights and chewed fingernails hoping and praying for a positive outcome. THANK YOU!

On January 12, 2020 we will hold our Congregational Meeting to present to you a balanced budget. We will also discuss ways we intend to move forward and the checks that will be put in to make sure we manage resources as best we can. We have many projects that we can move forward on, (in a responsible way) to improve our church. I hope all of you can attend for the vote and discussion. This is your Church, your questions and concerns are always welcome.

Our Council will be moving forward in 2020 also. We have some Council members who will be leaving later this year and we need to find members who can fill some positions. Please keep informed, especially if you have an interest in getting involved.

I also want to reach out to all of you regarding Safe Harbor. Our 4 day week this year is January 25-29. This is an important Community Outreach for BLC. Jim and Margaret Hutchinson have spent many years supporting this program. My wife, Chris and I believe and support their efforts. Volunteering to help those in need for a few hours a year is so important to this cause. If you have volunteered in the past. Thank you. If you have not volunteered there are plenty of people at BLC that can mentor you. It is not hard work and the reward of helping those in need is gratifying.

Information on volunteering will be available in the gathering space. Help support this program.

Chuck

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Traverse City, Michigan
"We Journey with God to serve with Love."

Minutes from the Church Council Meeting of November 19, 2019

CALL TO ORDER: Leonard Graf, Vice President, at 6:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER: Mark McPherson

ROLL CALL: Tim Fox, Secretary: In attendance, Pastor Paul Busekist, Phil Anderson, Jan Stretlien, Nancy Downer, Cindy Monroe, Leonard Graf, Mark McPherson, Jim Monroe, Katie Fox, Paul Wiemerslage, Annie Slabaugh and Tim Fox. Excused absence: Pastor Paul Busekist and Chuck Ardingo. Pastor Paul arrived from his Continuing Education in Arizona about twenty minutes prior to adjournment.

VISITOR/S OR CONGREGATIONAL COMMENT: 1) Kate Holtfreter, Member, spoke regarding the 2020 Budget and the Church Flowers. Stating the of the weekly donation of \$40 the actual cost is \$35. Silk flowers would cost approximately \$120. Christmas Poinsettias, we get 45-50 orders and actually make money on the orders. Suggesting we use those monies to cover budgeted flowers. Kate also stated we have 46 weeks of flowers and 31 weeks are covered by parishioners. 2) Kate then stated her concerns on staff cuts, with Council looking at some staff cuts but not all, regarding wages. 3) Sharon Weller, Office Administrator spoke: 1) Asking for a new folding machine for the office. The current one is 20 years old and time for a new one. Currently have one bid in the \$2,300 to \$2,500 range. 2) Sharon then mentioned her concerns regarding staff salary cuts, as 2 of the 4 positions being considered for cuts are 2 positions she holds.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: A motion to approve the agenda for the 11/19/2019, motion to approve by Tim Fox, seconded by Mark McPherson, motion carried. New Items added to the New Business portion: SEMF, Sustaining Endowment Memorial Fund and New Folding Machine.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 15,2019 COUNCIL MEETING: Motion to approve the minutes as written by Cindy Monroe, seconded by Nancy Downer. Motion carried.

REPORTS:

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Chuck Ardingo, President: Absent for this meeting: Leonard Graf, Chaired the meeting and asked that to be recognized for comments that Council please raise their hand.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Pastor Paul Busekist: Absent at this time of the meeting. No report at this time.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Katie Fox, Treasurer: 1) Katie stated that she had distributed the reports to all of Council prior to the meeting and if any members had questions regarding the October financial numbers to please contact her directly, rather than go over the numbers during this time in an effort to save time for the Budget discussion. Katie did mention that October income was \$38,755 with a Budgeted income of \$28,000. Also, that the craft fair income was \$1,000 over budget. Regarding the YTD budget we have a deficit of \$8,775 which is \$9,000 better than we had anticipated. Regarding the 2020 Budget we are still waiting for final pledge numbers prior to discussing cuts. Cindy Monroe asked for specifics regarding cuts so that Council would be able to answer questions from Members regarding the various cuts. It was decided to wait until actual numbers are available and that the cuts are not firm but just potential cuts. Jim Monroe, Financial Secretary, stated that we had 84 pledges at the time of the meeting versus 83 for 2019 pledges. Also, that we are seeing an increase in the dollar size of the pledges...

OLD BUSINESS:

A. **2020 BUDGET:** Previously covered by Katie Fox, Treasurer.

B. **BY-LAW CHANGE:** Leonard Graf: The Church Council recommends that the Congregation approve the changing the number of elected members to Council from the present 15 to 10, by approving the following change to the Bylaws: Bylaw BL 4.01 to read: There shall be 10 elected members of the Council. Motioned to approve by Mark McPherson, seconded by Tim Fox, motion carried.

C. **REIMAGING OF COUNCIL:** This item is being handled by Chuck Ardingo who was absent. The above item, B, is part of the reimaging. There was talk of combining Christian Education and Y2A, as we do not have a representative of Christian Education on Council.

D. **VISIONS UPDATE:** Phil Anderson: Stated, that Revive, the program from the ELCA, Dave Strange, and Pastor Adam's Visions are being worked on by the committee.

NEW BUSINESS

A. **PLEDGE FOLLOW UP:** Jim Monroe, previously gave a pledge update during the Treasurer's Report. All of Council were encouraged to continue to ask for pledges from the Congregation.

B. **NEW MEMBERS:** Cindy Monroe: Motioned to approve the following New Members to BLC: Jonathan Waters, Dale and Kathryn Thiel and Dale and Barbara Wentzloff and Jim and Cindy Kriesel. Seconded by Tim Fox. Motion carried.

C. **SET DATE FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:** Leonard Graf motioned to set the date for January 12, 2020, with January 19, 2020 as the date should there be no Church because of weather on January 12th. Seconded by Jan Stretlien. Motion carried.

D. **RENTAL HOUSE:** Leonard Graf: Leonard and Carl Lehto reviewed the home. The immediate needs are carpet replacement and a new dishwasher. There was a motion by Leonard to have a Special Committee of Chuck Ardingo, Carl Lehto, Summer Grayson and Leonard Graf handle the home repairs. Seconded by Mark McPherson. Motion carried. It was noted that we have a possible renter for the property. The amended motion above approved a limit of \$2,000 to be spent on improvements from the Asset Replacement Fund.

E. **SEMF: SUSTAINING ENDOWMENT MEMORIAL FUND:** 1) Cindy Monroe asked about spending those monies on the budget. Phil Anderson stated that those monies are in an investment account with the interest from the monies used for the needs of BLC as selected by the SEMF committee. Leonard then read the Bylaw stating how the monies are used. Mark McPherson stated that we need the fund to grow to support BLC as we are currently shrinking. Katie Fox stated that we must balance the budget as taking monies from various funds or bank accounts is a short term fix but we still have the problem, budget problem, in the long run. Paul Wiemerslage stated that he understands Cindy's point of view. Cindy commented that she was not comfortable with not using the available funds.

F. **FOLDING MACHINE:** Phil Anderson: Asked that we use Asset Replacement for the purchase of a new folding machine. It was so moved by Cindy Monroe, seconded by Katie Fox. Motion carried.

PASTOR PAUL: Pastor arrived from his Arizona trip and had the following comments: 1) 12/08 will be the new member induction. 2) His continuing education trip went very well. He hopes to have a retreat for members who would like to go to Arizona in November of 2020. 3) Pastor attending an Executive Leadership Conference in January of 2020 as part of continuing education. 4) Pastor spoke on Council and Worship and Music starting new things in 2020. 5) Bethlehem Vision is working on Revive and hopes to have this done by January of 2020. 6) Pastor then spoke on getting out of the Church to reach out to the community, maybe have a Council meeting at an offsite location. Letting the community know about BLC similar to what we are doing with Verse on Tap and Safe Harbor.

VISITOR OR CONGREGATIONAL COMMENT: None.

GOOD OF THE ORDER: A time for general/undocumented comments by each Council Member is so desired.

LORD'S PRAYER: The Lord's Prayer was said by all.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn by Mark McPherson and seconded by Leonard Graf, motion carried. Adjournment at 7:54 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Fox, Council Secretary

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

Happy New Year! January can be a rough time for a lot of people—youth included. The hype of the Christmas and Advent season is over and now it's just cold and dark. Hopefully, what we have planned here at Bethlehem will help get you out and keep you excited, happy and healthy!

JANUARY HAPPENINGS ...

We've got a special event happening on Epiphany Sunday! We will be having three of our confirmation youth complete their **Affirmation of Baptism** (aka: Confirmation) on **Sunday, January 5th 2020** at the 8:30AM service. I encourage you to join us in worship to show your support for these hardworking and awesome confirmands.

I am excited to announce that we are now starting **Middle School Night** for the 2020 Spring Semester! I'm very excited to be joining our middle school youth on fun adventures and fellowship. We will have our first Middle School Night on **Wednesday, January 8th** at 5:00PM. We will be going to Lucky Jack's to give laser tag a try!

Pancake Breakfast will be on **Sunday, January 19th** between services. I am starting to look for volunteers for the pancake breakfast so please reach out to me if you are interested in joining us—don't forget: **participation in the pancake breakfast is required in order to attend our ski trip in February!**

Our **High School Night** will also be on **Sunday, January 19th** at 5:00PM. We will be meeting up at the Leelanau Curling Club and giving curling a try. It's going to be an exciting adventure trying out this somewhat uncommon sport!

BLUES is back in action this month! We will be venturing out to Twin Lakes on **Saturday, January 25th** at 2:00PM for a sledding adventure! The hills will be alive with the sounds of our laughter and joy and I invite you to join us. We'll also be having homemade hot chocolate!

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

As we go into our January and begin the New Year I ask that you keep Bethlehem's Youth and their families in your prayers as they start back up at school and start this year off strong! This time of the year can be hard for a lot of us and we've still got a lot of winter to go.

"Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:30-31)

Cheerfully in Christ,

Annie Slabaugh

Director of Youth and Outreach

Bethlehem Lutheran Church – Traverse City



2020 Pledge Results (updated 12/23/2019)

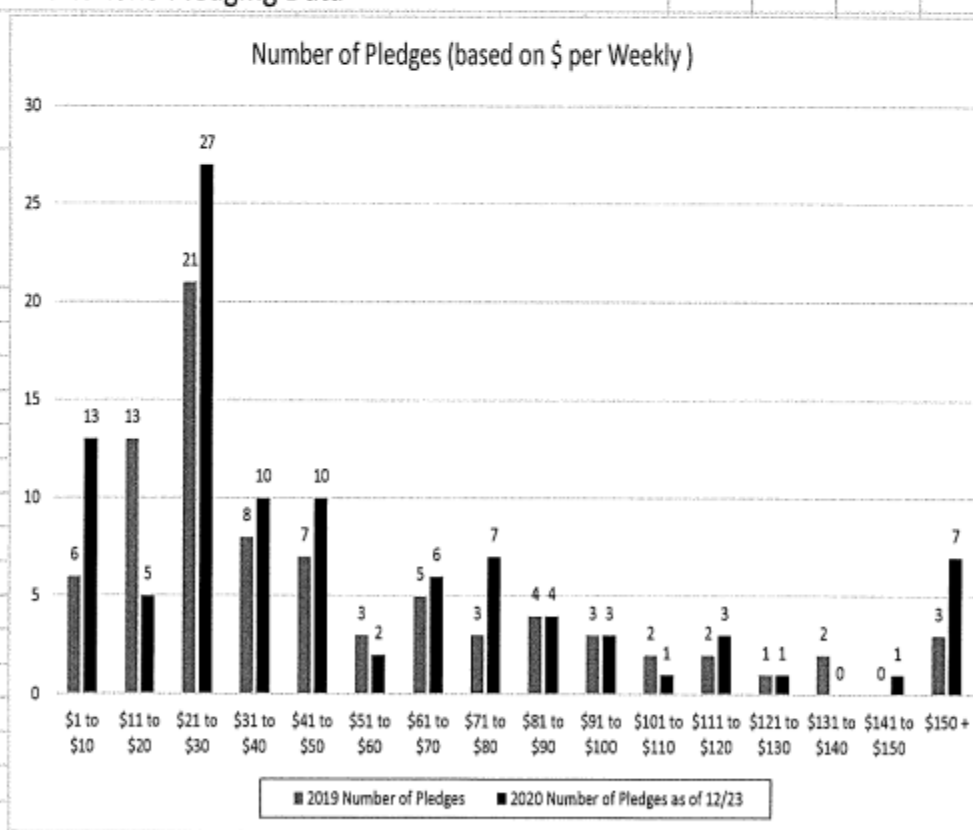
Bethlehem Lutheran Church's Stewardship campaign was successful. As of December, 23rd we have received 100 pledges totaling \$295,304 compared to 83 pledges for 2019 that totaled \$218,790. The increase in 2020 pledges over 2019 pledges equals \$76,514 or a 35% increase.

A breakdown of the 2020 pledge data shows:

- 27 new pledges totaling \$66,920
- 51 pledges with increased giving totaling \$14,920 or \$5.74 per week,
- 4 pledges were down by \$1,020 or \$0.42 per week,
- 18 pledges remained the same,
- The average pledge per week for 2020 is \$56.79, the average pledge per week in 2019 was \$50.69,
- There were 7 funerals in 2019. The net effect of those funerals will be a reduction in giving of \$1,070 in 2020,
- Non-ELCA pledges totaled \$14,460, this is an increase of \$3,100 from \$11,360 in 2019
- There are 188 active giving units, 152 giving with envelopes and 36 giving via ACH or RMD. There are 17 units active in the system with no recent record of giving. The total family giving units is 205.
- There are 31 ACHs (Electronic Deposit) giving units with 2020 giving totaling \$75,228. 8 of the 31 ACHs are new in 2020 with giving totaling \$11,320.
- There are 5 RMD (Required Minimum Distribution) giving units with giving totaling \$30,312 in 2020

2019 & 2020 Pledging Data

Pledge Range (Weekly)	2019 Number of Pledges	2020 Number of Pledges as of 12/23
\$1 to \$10	6	13
\$11 to \$20	13	5
\$21 to \$30	21	27
\$31 to \$40	8	10
\$41 to \$50	7	10
\$51 to \$60	3	2
\$61 to \$70	5	6
\$71 to \$80	3	7
\$81 to \$90	4	4
\$91 to \$100	3	3
\$101 to \$110	2	1
\$111 to \$120	2	3
\$121 to \$130	1	1
\$131 to \$140	2	0
\$141 to \$150	0	1
\$150+	3	7
Total	83	100



Stewardship

The first of the ten ELCA stewardship principals is to “Respond gratefully”. This is based on 2 Corinthians 8:5 “...but they gave themselves first to the Lord”. You did respond gratefully to the 2020 stewardship drive. The finance committee and the church council were looking at adjustments to the budget going into 2020. These adjustments would have impacted a number of areas. As a result of you responding gratefully these adjustments have been restored. The ELCA also says that our role as God’s stewards is one of many dimensions. This included being challenged. Thank you.

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Welcome to Bethlehem New Members

Cindy and Jim Kriesel sponsored by B.J. and Tom Christensen

Dale and Kathryn Thiel sponsored by Mary Woodring and Jim Hinds

Jonathan Waters sponsored by Sarah Denton

Dale and Barbara Wentzloff sponsored by Carl and Suzanne Lehto

Be sure to check the new photos which are up on the wall beside the family quilt so you can link faces/names.

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

November & YTD 2019 Financial Results:

November income of \$38,626 was \$9,792 over budgeted income of \$28,834. November expense of \$32,074 was \$682 below budgeted expense of \$32,756.

November was budgeted to have a deficit of \$3,922, but BLC actually had a \$6,552 surplus.

YTD income of \$359,851 was \$23,287 above budgeted income of \$336,564. YTD expense of \$354,419 was \$5,158 over budgeted expense of \$349,261. YTD we budgeted to have a deficit of \$12,697 as of the end of November. We ended November with a surplus of \$8,432 which means we are \$21,129 ahead of where we budgeted to be at this point in time. The strong contributions in October and November in combination with lower than budgeted expenses in August and September brought the church into the black.

To net this out, after the first eleven months of the year we have surplus cash flow of \$8,432. Our budget for the remaining month shows a surplus cash flow of \$5,489. Said another way, we will have a surplus of \$13,921 at year end compared to the \$7,209 deficit that was originally projected. This of course assumes there are no large unexpected expenses in December.

XYZ - Our next gathering will be on Thursday January 16th. Pot luck lunch at noon. The program will be by a representative of the Salvation Army, there will be a video and talk about their 125th anniversary of serving in Traverse City. All are welcome.

Starting this month at Bethlehem: Seeking to read the bible more? Willing to share your insights? Wanting to set aside “regular” prayer time? A weekly “neighborhood drop-in” style bible study will begin on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 from 9:30-11:30am. Barb Graf will lead, with help and participation from all. While this is not a Bethel bible study series (no concepts to memorize), Barb will use her Bethel training. The Youth room has been reserved. We plan to have a table and chairs to sit around and coffee available. So bring whatever bible version you prefer and join us on January 8th at 9:30am.



Christian Education News January 2020

Sunday School Teachers Needed

Teachers needed for Sunday School

Pre-K
K-2nd
3rd-6th

This very brief commitment runs between services 9:45am-10:45am and simple lessons are pre-scripted with all materials.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

Vacation Bible School is tentatively scheduled for July 20th to July 24th this summer.

MANY volunteers will be needed in MANY areas to make it a success!

Please prayerfully consider this opportunity to share the love of Jesus with our children!

Watch for more details to come soon ☺



Drop-In Bible Study

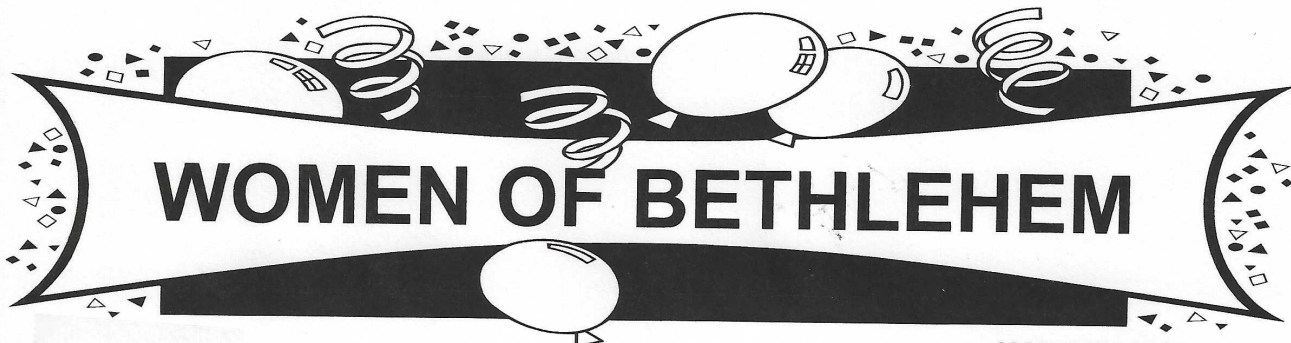
Start the New Year growing in God's Word!
Weekly sessions start Wednesday 1/08/2020 from 9:30am-11:30am in the BLC Youth Room with coffee available ☺
Please see Barb Graf for details.

Calling All Musicians

Christian Ed. is looking for musicians to accompany our Sunday School opening songs.

We love piano music, but guitar, ukulele, or other instruments are also welcome! This short commitment is approximately 15-30" typically twice per month with very simple songs.
Please prayerfully consider this service ministry for our children.





WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM

JANUARY 2020



THE UNKNOWN

I do not know what still awaits, Or what the morrow brings;
 But with the glad salute of Faith, I hail its open wings!
 For this I know - that in my Lord shall all my needs be met;
 And I can trust the heart of Him Who has not failed me yet...

--Author Unknown--

Another year has flown by and here we are starting a new year. As we look back over 2019, much has happened through WELCA such as our yearly events - the Spring Fling, Thank Offering Weekend and the Christmas Tea. Much work, time and joy go into making these events happen. We hope you took time to take part in them. We especially want to thank the members of Bethlehem for their generous support of our Thank Offering Weekend. Over \$1000 was received which goes to many worthwhile WELCA projects. Thank you!! Women of Bethlehem also attended the Spring Gathering and the Fall Convention and Retreat where we receive inspiration and have fellowship with other WELCA groups in Michigan. There is a triennial convention being held in Phoenix, Arizona on July 16-19, 2020. See the *Living Threads* on the kiosk. All women are invited to attend.

We would like to invite all women to join us in one of our circles. Right now we have three circles: Sarah meets on the second Tuesday of the month at noon; Ruth Circle meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 1PM; Rebecca Anna Circle meets on the second Thursday at 1PM. If none of these times work for you, another circle can be started at a time more convenient for you. One circle is studying the Bible from the beginning and the other two circles are using the Bible Study from the *Gather* magazine. Following is a synopsis of the *Gather* January study: "Hearing God's Voice: In the Old Testament, God's call comes in many forms. (written by Kathryn Kleinhans)

If you have any thoughts or questions about any of the above, please call Nancy Ammann 946-8433

My wish for each and every one of you is for a Happy and Blessed New year.
 God is near to us at all times. Call on Him. Trust Him. Love Him. Worship Him.

Nancy Ammann

WELCA President



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

ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.



Epiphany - A time in the Church year when we celebrate the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles - the story of the Magi and their visit to the Christ child. It is a season when we give thanks that Jesus came to *all* of God's people.

Please take the time to check out the various ways in which the ELCA acknowledges our connections with people across the earth, especially during this season. You may do this by picking up a copy of *Living Lutheran* magazine from the table by the front entrance. You can read stories to see what other folks are doing to bring Christ to the nations.

Recent posts from ELCA Global Mission

Fifth International Consultation in Latin America and the Caribbean

Representatives from Latin American and Caribbean churches and their companion synods gathered in Antigua, Guatemala in November for the Fifth International Consultation. The theme was "Weaving Links in Mission" (or "Tejendo Vinculos en la Misi3n). Together the group delved deep into topics such as migration and gender justice, learning from one another. View pictures at:

https://www.facebook.com/pg/ELCAGlobalMission/photos/?tab=album&album_id=2987436414622949

Meet International Woman Leader Scholar Satta Sheriff

Satta Sheriff, Wittenberg University Class of 2023, is an International Women Leaders scholar from the Lutheran Church in Liberia, and Wittenberg University recently profiled her on its website. "I believe with all that I have achieved, that my journey is just beginning," Satta said. Read about her activism here:

<https://www.wittenberg.edu/news/10-30-19/inspiring-global-change>

Reminder---All are welcome at our Council Meetings: Tuesday, January 21 at 6 pm. is our next meeting. There is a time slot for guests to speak at the beginning of the meeting.

DEADLINE FOR COUNCIL REPORTS IS WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15

Bethlehem Book Club: Our club continues to meet the 4th Tuesday at 5:30 at the Cottage Café. The book for January 28 is *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* and for February 25 is *The Library Book*. All are welcome. You can choose to eat and drink something or just share in the discussion.

Monroe small group will not meet on the 3rd Sunday of January because we will be preparing the meal on the last Sunday for Safe Harbor. Our meetings will resume on the 3rd Sunday of February at 12:30pm and continue for March and April. We will then be off until we resume in September.

Finger Food Fellowship: Thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who have signed up to bring treats on Sunday morning. This is an equal opportunity event. Please feel free to add your name to the sign up and bring anything that only requires a napkin. Hungry bellies appreciate that little bite of something.



SHOP AT FAMILY FARE AND HELP RAISE MONEY FOR QUILTS!!

Shop at Family Fare, 905 E. 8th Street here in Traverse City (or at any Family Fare in the area) and help raise money for quilts!

*To warm others with more than a prayers,
save register receipts when you shop Family Fare!
Lutheran World Relief quilters need help from you.
Bring Family Fare receipts to us that you could do.
This helps raise money for the supplies it will take...
for fabric, thread, and shipping necessary for the quilts we make!*

Questions? Please call Betty Rutila at 231-947-1013

Dear Friends at Bethlehem Lutheran:

Words cannot adequately express the gratitude we hold for your generous hospitality and the ministry you shared as we planned and prepared for Jim's Celebration of Life. Pastor Paul has been a servant leader ministering to us during this difficult time. Your many gifted servants at Bethlehem assisted in all of the details honoring Jim and our family in the process. We have shared numerous events at Bethlehem over the years; you have always felt as a sister congregation to the Helman's. Please know that your caring and your concern for us means so very much and we do not take any of this for granted!

May God bless you! May God bless your serving! May God grant you the courage to live on in the faith as you take turns holding each other up in the name of Christ!

With deep gratitude and our love!
Sherri and the Helman Family



Did you know Love Thy Neighbor has a Medical Equipment Loan Ministry? If you, a friend or a family members needs a wheelchair, walker, cane, bathroom equipment or more, we can help! We have closet locations at Christ the King in Acme, Grace Episcopal mid-town, St. Patrick in the Grawn area and at the Love Thy Neighbor office on East Front Street. **Call 941-5683** to speak with us about a loan or a donation of equipment. Thanks to our partnership you can have love and care at home!

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is always looking for volunteers:

- 1.Skilled/Unskilled volunteers to serve as site coaches leading and teaching groups of volunteers in finish carpentry. No experience necessary.
 - 2.Committee Members. Time commitment is about three hours a month. Committees needing members are Faith Relations, Family Selection and Events.
 - 3.Re-Store volunteers / Donation drives / Pickup and Delivery
 - 4.Lunch volunteers to feed construction site crews.
 - 5.Deconstruction teams to salvage materials to be sold at the Re-Sale Store.
- If you're interested in helping out, please call Michelle Reichert at 231-941-4663

Health Concerns*



The Power of Prayer

*Richard Fernholz, Nancy Smith, Hazel Lautner, Tom Miller, Margie Whitney,
Jo Hasse, Ruth Boerman, Ellie Tacke, Bev Attwood, Roy Stowe,
Priscilla Thompson, Marleen Baesch, Alvin Kober, Bill Gourdie, Lynn Hoyt,
Jan Waisanen, Molly Eastman, Harper Wiemerslage,
Roy & Marilyn Dumond, and Brenda Denoyer*

Grand Traverse Pavilions: Bev Attwood, Bill Gourdie

Homebound: Hazel Lautner, Ruth Boerman, Marleen Baesch

Traverse Manor: Margie Whitney, Marlan Bradford

French Manor LaFranier: Jo Hasse, Roy Stowe

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.net

*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...

WELCOME TO OUR NEW PAGE

HONORING GOD'S CREATION

Medication Safety: You can save a life through responsible medication disposal

Nearly 70 percent of people who misuse pain medications take them from an unsuspecting friend or relative. Play it safe with proper disposal of your unused prescription pills and old medicine.

How to Dispose of Your Unused or Expired Medication

Munson Healthcare offers free, safe medication disposal throughout northern Michigan. The drop-off process is simple and anonymous – you are not required to check in or provide any personal information to anyone, including your name.

To dispose of your unused or old medications, simply take them to a Munson Healthcare location near you and look for the blue MedSafe disposal bin (shown right). To use, simply pull down on the handle and drop your containers into the bin. To make drop-off easier, please consider the following tips:

The contents of the bin will be routinely collected and incinerated, so there is no need to peel prescription labels off of your med containers.

If you have numerous containers, you are welcome to place them all in a plastic or paper bag and then drop the bag into the MedSafe bin.

MedSafe Medication Disposal Near You

[Foster Family Community Health Center in Traverse City](#): Pharmacy
[Munson Medical Center in Traverse City](#): Main Lobby

For more area locations, see <https://www.munsonhealthcare.org/patients-visitors/medication-safety>

Acceptable Medications

Pills, tablets, and capsules

Ointments, creams, and lotions

Powders

4 ounces or less of liquid medicines (kept in original container, wrapped in paper towel, and sealed in a bag)

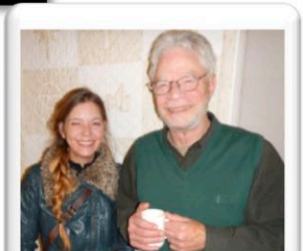
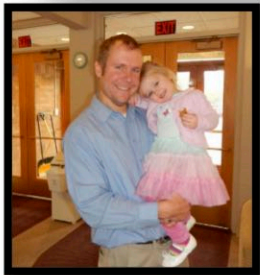
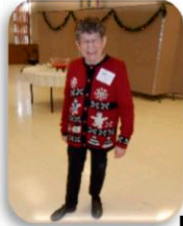
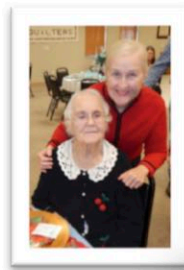
What to Do with Old Sharps/Needles

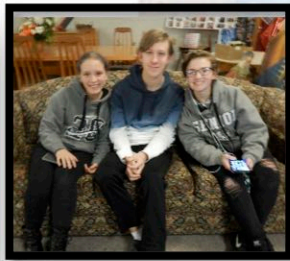
Munson does not accept sharps in their MedSafe bins.

Holli Home Health of Traverse City collects sharps that are dropped off in a sturdy container, such as an empty coffee can or laundry soap bottle. Contact them at 231-943-1415 for more information.

THIS PAGE IS WAITING FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE CONGREGATION. EX. Gardening, Recycling, Saving the Planet.

Please email to admin@bethlehemtc.org and indicate you would like your ideas in the Monthly Star





Confirmation Ally, Courtney and Austin Leatherman



BLC Contacts

PLEASE NOTE SEVERAL ADDRESS UPDATES

Church Office

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

Church Council

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, Property (Carl Lehto-Not on Council)	property.committee@bethlehemtc.org
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Nancy Downer, Worship and Music	worship.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Paul Wiemerslage, Youth/Y2A	youth.committee@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
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
<p>10:30am - Worship Service</p> <p>11am - All Star DE</p> <p>11:45am - Adult Education</p> <p>12:45am - Membership &</p> <p>1:45am - Sunday School</p> <p>11am - Modern Worship - S</p> <p>2:30pm - Wor. & Mus.</p> <p>5:15pm - Confirmation</p>	<p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>3pm - Lessons/Weller</p> <p>6:30pm - Gamblers</p>	<p>Office Closed</p>	<p>9am - All Star DE</p> <p>5:30pm - ACOA (LR)</p> <p>6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7pm - Vocal Choir</p>	<p>9am - All Star DE</p> <p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>2:30pm - Front Street Jazz</p>	<p>9am - All Star DE</p> <p>11am - All Star DE</p> <p>5pm - Celebrate! Worship</p> <p>5pm - Worship-S</p>	<p>9am - All Star DE</p> <p>11am - All Star DE</p> <p>5pm - Celebrate! Worship</p> <p>5pm - Worship-S</p>
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<p>10:30am - Worship Service</p> <p>11am - Congreg. Meeting</p>	<p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>3pm - Lessons/Weller</p> <p>3pm - Oster SG</p> <p>6:30pm - Gamblers</p>	<p>9am - LWR Quilters</p> <p>9am - Prayer Shawl</p> <p>9am - Property Work Group</p> <p>6:30pm - Christian Ed Mtg.</p>	<p>9:30am - Neighborhood</p> <p>2pm - ALS Foundation</p> <p>3pm - Lessons/Weller</p> <p>5pm - Middle School Night</p>	<p>9am - Baby Pantry-FH</p> <p>1pm - Rebecca/Ann Circle</p> <p>5:30pm - ACOA (LR)</p> <p>6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7pm - Vocal Choir</p>	<p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>2:30pm - Front Street Jazz</p> <p>6pm - Faith and Family</p>	<p>5pm - Worship-S</p>
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<p>10am - Worship Service</p> <p>11am - Congreg. Meeting</p>	<p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>3pm - Lessons/Weller</p> <p>3pm - Oster SG</p> <p>6:30pm - Gamblers</p>	<p>9am - LWR Quilters</p> <p>9am - Prayer Shawl</p> <p>9am - Property Work Group</p> <p>12pm - Sarah Circle</p> <p>1pm - Ruth Circle @</p> <p>4:30pm - Executive</p> <p>6pm - Y2A Mtg.</p>	<p>9:30am - Neighborhood</p> <p>3pm - Lessons/Weller</p>	<p>12pm - XYZ</p> <p>5:30pm - ACOA (LR)</p> <p>6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7pm - Vocal Choir</p>	<p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>10am - Sew Pieceful</p> <p>2:30pm - Front Street Jazz</p>	<p>5pm - Celebrate Worship-S</p>
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<p>10:30am - Worship Service</p> <p>11:45am - Adult Education</p> <p>12:45am - Pancake Bkfst</p> <p>1:45am - Sunday School</p> <p>11am - Christensen SG</p> <p>11am - Modern Worship - S</p> <p>2:15pm - Confirmation</p> <p>5pm - High School Night</p>	<p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>3pm - Lessons/Weller</p> <p>6:30pm - Gamblers</p>	<p>9am - LWR Quilters</p> <p>9am - Prayer Shawl</p> <p>9am - Property Work Group</p> <p>11:30am - SEMF Mtg.</p> <p>6pm - Council Meeting</p> <p>7pm - Lautner SG @ at the</p>	<p>9:30am - Neighborhood</p> <p>1pm - Johnson SG (Offsite)</p> <p>3pm - Lessons/Weller</p>	<p>9am - Baby Pantry-FH</p> <p>1pm - Lehto SG</p> <p>5:30pm - ACOA (LR)</p> <p>6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7pm - Vocal Choir</p>	<p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>2:30pm - Front Street Jazz</p> <p>4pm - Drive My Way</p>	<p>1pm - Drive My Way</p> <p>2pm - BLUES</p> <p>5pm - Holden Evening</p>
26	27	28	29	30	31	
<p>10:30am - Worship Service</p> <p>11:45am - Adult Education</p> <p>12:45am - Sunday School</p> <p>11am - Modern Worship - S</p> <p>1pm - Drive My Way</p>	<p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>3pm - Lessons/Weller</p> <p>6:30pm - Gamblers</p>	<p>9am - LWR Quilters</p> <p>9am - Prayer Shawl</p> <p>9am - Property Work Group</p> <p>5:30pm - Book/Supper Club</p> <p>5:30pm - Newcomers</p>	<p>9:30am - Neighborhood</p> <p>3pm - Lessons/Weller</p>	<p>5:30pm - ACOA (LR)</p> <p>6pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7pm - Vocal Choir</p>	<p>10am - Alanon-LR2</p> <p>2:30pm - Front Street Jazz</p>	



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