

# June 2026



**Bethlehem**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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



Website: [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org)  
Email: [bethlehem@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:bethlehem@bethlehemtc.org)

Building Hours:  
Monday – Thursday, 9am to 2:30pm

Office :  
Monday – Thursday, 9am to 2:30pm

**Worship Times:**

Sunday: 10 am Modern Worship with  
Traditional service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday.  
Livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube  
Sunday School/Adult Education: 9:15am  
Nursery open during worship service

## Follow the STAR to Bethlehem!

**Our Mission:**

We worship, work and welcome... Sharing God's love and grace with all.

**Our Vision:**

Together, we embody our mission by BOLDLY following Jesus, serving the needs of the world and one another, and caring for all of God's Creation. ALL ARE WELCOME.

*A Song of Ascents.*

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills—  
from where will my help come?**
- 2 My help comes from the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth.** (from Psalm 121)



## “Lifting up my eyes” to blessings...

Dear Bethlehem sisters and brothers,

I give thanks for many May blessings we experienced this year: the wedding of Courtney and Kaden Young, our 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse O.N.T.A.P. since Covid (with our own BLC band playing), the first communion of Emma and Hazel, a life-giving Synod Assembly, a thoughtful study of the book of Ecclesiastes...and to be sure, much more.

As we move into June, we say goodbye also to a member and council president who has helped see us through a lot of transition and new ministry. Gail Goldsmith, as she states below, is moving downstate to be closer to family. Gail, we will miss you indeed, and hope to see you when you revisit TC in the future!

This summer, we will faithfully engage once again with Safe Harbor, Stony Lake Lutheran Camp (bringing THREE campers from BLC this year), Vacation Bible School and Cherry Fest! **We will also hike together on June 11<sup>th</sup> at a favorite trail of many (Empire Bluffs – see more details on further pages of this STAR)**, and we may even try for a “Longest Day Hike” (near the 21<sup>st</sup>)...

So keep on the lookout for ways to help out in ALL areas of our new vision at BLC (New Life Together, Social Ministry and Outreach, and Creation Care.)

There is a place for everyone at Bethlehem. Peace, and a blessed summer to you all.

*-Pastor Paul*

### **The Last Word From This President**

I have been on the Church Council for 6 years. It has been an honor for me to be able to serve our church, community and our members. I have cherished all of our time together serving with so many wonderful people. You are all so special.

I will be moving to Clare to be closer to family. I will come back and visit as I will miss you all.

God's blessings to you all.

Gail

**History of Bethlehem's Mortgage** Bethlehem's mortgage voyage began in 1997 when the congregation approved spending up to \$1,200,000.00 to build the Fellowship Hall and Gathering Area. A construction loan was completed with Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA with terms for a 20 year adjustable rate mortgage of 7.75% for the first four years.

Throughout the years, the mortgage note changed several times where the monthly rate went from \$8,784 to \$7,901 to \$8,499 (this was when the property at 1020 Peninsula Dr was purchased), then to \$5,779 to \$5,396 and finally to \$4,966 in 2016. This added up to over \$3,000,000 for principal and interest. The final mortgage payment was made in November, 2025.

To celebrate this, there will be a party where the mortgage will be "burned" on Sunday, June 14th after the Congregational Assembly. Join us for lunch and celebration.

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**NEW MEMBERS:** Three new members were accepted on May 31: Kathy Blume (sponsored by Barbara Oster) and Marilyn and Mark Fornwall (sponsored by Laura and Dan Hahn). If you are interested in membership, please contact the office or membership co-chairs Cindy Monroe at [cmonroe@chartermi.net](mailto:cmonroe@chartermi.net) or John Halstead at [marilynjohnstc@hotmail.com](mailto:marilynjohnstc@hotmail.com)

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**Teddy Bear Ministry** Do you know that we have a Teddy Bear ministry? Teddy bears are given to folks, including children who are feeling lonely, who have an illness, having surgery, are homebound, or are in an assisted living place. Really anyone who needs to feel the comfort only a Teddy Bear can give. We would love to give one to any and all when in need of extra love. Please let Jan or Peggy know and we will make sure you are given one. Please contact Jan Stretlien 231-947-3265 or Peggy Burns 231-392-6913 with any questions.



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### **Please Note**

Barbara Oster/Administrative Assistant works 9:00am-2:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Phil Anderson/Bookkeeper works 8:30am-12:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Please note that beginning May 20th, Phil works these days through the summer months

Alanna Steffunick-Boomer/Ministry Coordinator working in the office on the first Tuesday of each month from 9:30am - 12:30pm, and on Wednesdays from 11:30am - 2:30pm on all other weeks. I will also work from home throughout the week.

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**New Life Together** The group met on April to start planning on things for everyone to do. We plan on doing Women's Wine Down Wednesday, Tapas (get together for appetizers). We would like to plan on going to a Pit Spitter game. We are looking to start a Men's social group and would welcome any ideas. We would like to have some folks volunteer to give a few of our members rides to and from church on Sundays. Also, we would love to have folks deliver flowers, to make home visits and/or to take communion to our members. Our next meeting is June 29th and all are welcome. Any questions or ideas, please contact Peggy Burns 231.392.6913

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**Where 2 or more are gathered in my name. (Matt 18:20)** In our world today there are a lot of things that we need prayer for. Every 4th Tues. starting at 11:00, we will be offering a time and place in church to pray. The June date is June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Please join us. If any questions, please contact Peggy Burns at 231-392-6913 or [cobaltblues2003@yahoo.com](mailto:cobaltblues2003@yahoo.com)

**Grief Group** meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month from 3:30-4:30 in the gathering space. The group will not meet on June 1<sup>st</sup> but plans to meet on June 15<sup>th</sup>. Any questions contact Peggy Burns 232-392-6913.

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**Chair Yoga** meets at 3:00pm on Mondays. It is \$5 per class.

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**Sunday School holds class at 9:15am on Sunday throughout the summer.**

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**Creation Care June dates:**

- **June 1:** we are involved in the 'planting' day at the Community Garden on June 1 at 9am. All are welcome.
- **June 11:** All are welcome as we 'savor' creation. Please join us as we hike Empire Bluffs. We will meet at the trailhead at 6:30p on June 11. Hope to see you there.
- **June 29:** our next Creation Care core team meeting will be Monday, June 29th at 6pm in the Youth Room. Subcommittee members may be meeting before as needed. Contact Paul Wiemerslage, Tina Dohm or Pastor Paul for any updates.

**The Creation Care group will have periodic recycling tips in the STAR.** This month we are starting off with a list of drop-off recycling sites in Grand Traverse County.

Acme Twp	6455 US 31 North Williamsburg, MI 49690 (By Flex Self Storage)
Blair Twp	Closed
Fife Lake Twp	616 Bates Street, Fife Lake, MI 49633
Garfield Twp & Traverse City	2600 Lafranier, Traverse City, MI 49686 (In front of County Health Dept Bldg)
Paradise Twp	2300 E M113, Kingsley, MI 49649
Peninsula Twp	Devils Dive Road,
Whitewater Twp	5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, MI 49690

For more information, go to [www.gtcountymi.gov](http://www.gtcountymi.gov), click on Departments, then More, then Recycle Smart.

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**Trinity Lutheran School will have its 4<sup>th</sup> Annual "Trinity Tourney" Golf** at Elmbrook Golf Course on August 14, 2026. Shotgun start at 9:00am with contests and prizes. For more information or a copy of the brochure, see Barbara Oster in BLC's office.





**BOOK CLUB:** The book club is taking off its monthly meetings for the summer. Enjoy whatever you choose to read. New books will be available mid-August with a plan for the Sept meeting to be Wed Sept 23 or Sept 30.

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**A big thank you to all who have turned in Olesons' slips.** On March 8, 2026, we received a check from Olesons for \$294.24. In 2025, we received a total of \$1031.80 from people turning in their Olesons receipts. We will see how well we do this year! Thank you so much to everyone who turned in their Olesons receipts. Also, the area for the Oleson receipts is in the lower cabinets below the mailboxes (under the A-B-Cs...). The cabinet door is marked with the receptacle inside. Unfortunately, we are no longer collecting the receipts from Family Fair or any other grocery store. We just collect for Olesons

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**New Adventure to the north sponsored by Membership Committee:** The membership committee tries to make certain that there is contact with as many members as possible. What about when some of those members live in the U.P.? Those who are interested can go on an adventure! Mark and Kathy McPherson live in Cedarville and now have retirement jobs as local tour guides for some Great Lakes ships. They have graciously offered any BLC members a free tour of Sault Ste Marie. Yes, it will be a long day, but except for the drivers you can sleep in the car! **The date of the tour had to be rescheduled from Sat May 30 to sometime in the fall.** More info will be in the gathering space for you to indicate preferred dates and activities. Contact Cindy or Jim Monroe if questions.



**Safe Harbor** Bethlehem is handling meals three nights this month at Safe Harbor. It's hot dogs on June 23, pulled pork sandwiches on June 24, and fried chicken on June 25. Check the volunteer sign-up sheets in the Gathering Space to see if we still need volunteers to serve, prepare sides and salads or handle the other assignments. Good healthy treats are always in order as well. Any questions, please contact Bethlehem Safe Harbor Coordinator Tom Rockne at 231-631-0040 or tomrockne@gmail.com. Thank you to our amazing volunteers!

## Five fun facts from Synod Assembly:

1. Our national presiding Bishop Curry selected our assembly to attend and gave a wonderful talk and answered questions. When Bishop Curry was a congregational pastor he did a youth swap with a church in Connecticut, and our members Kathy and Mark McPherson had the pleasure of working with him.
2. There were 73 registered clergy and 147 lay members attending the assembly.
3. The resolution to encourage Mitten Synod Members to increase their care of creation passed and any BLC members who signed had their names included in the official assembly program.
4. The synod exceeded their \$10,000 offering goal with \$10,427 (BLC contributed \$637.11)
5. All future assemblies will be held at churches to be more cost effective. Plan now for May 14/15 2027 in Midland.



## Knights and Castles



**VBS 2026: Knights & Castles** is scheduled for July 27-29 (Mon-Wed), from 9am-1pm each day! VBS is open to kids ages 3-10 and registration will open June 1st at 9am - space is limited, so be sure to share the date with anyone you know who has kids in that age range! VBS is only possible with the help of many wonderful volunteers (adults and kids age 10+), so please let us know if you would like to help! There are many different volunteer opportunities, including leading groups of kids, helping with activities, decorating and prep, snack preparation, loaning of household items for decorations, donating snacks, and so much more. All are very appreciated and essential to making VBS a success! If you would like to help in any way, please reach out to Alanna at [alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org)

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

**Wed 6/3, 6/10, 6/17, 6/24** – The Pub TC, Traverse City 7:00pm;

**Fri 6/5**— The Dam Shop, Elk Rapids, 6:00pm

**Sat 6/6, Fri 6/26**— Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, 7:00pm



## Notes From Alanna

### **Parking Lot Fundraiser! Raise Funds for Youth!**

We will be opening the BLC parking lot for cars on July 4th prior to the 1pm airshow and prior to the 10:30pm fireworks, and July 5th prior to the 1pm airshow. All funds raised from the parking fees will benefit Bethlehem's youth! Volunteers will be needed to help supervise the parking lot, especially for the 4th of July fireworks! Sign up sheets will be out soon - please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions!



### **VBS Registration is Open!**

As of June 1st at 9am, registration for Knights & Castles VBS is open for kids ages 3-10! Spots are limited, so if you have kids or grandkids who would enjoy three days of medieval fun, sign them up now! VBS will run July 27-29 from 9am-1pm and will include snacks, music, crafts, science, storytime, and so much more. It is always one of the highlights of the summer at BLC, so please reach out to me if you have questions or would like to be involved!

*-Alanna Steffunick-Boomer, Ministry Coordinator*

## Christian Education News June 2026

Heed the call & join VBS this summer!  
9am-1pm July 27-29



We're continuing Sunday School for the summer –  
Join us at 9:15am every Sunday morning  
then stay for worship at 10am!

### **PARKING LOT FUNDRAISER**



Cherry Festival Week – watch for signup sheets!

### **Happy Father's Day!**



Blessed is the man  
who fears the Lord,  
who finds great delight  
in his commands.  
His children will be  
mighty in the land;  
the generation of the  
upright will be blessed.  
Psalm 112:1-2

-Christian Education Committee

## ELCA – Global Links - Caring for Community in Tanzania



For as long as Benjamin Mgilima Rajabu can remember, he dreamed of becoming a doctor and caring for the people in his rural Tanzanian community. For many years, that dream seemed impossibly distant. It may have remained out of reach if not for ELCA World Hunger. With its support, Benjamin began volunteering at a local hospital and earning a stipend that would eventually help him pay for medical school.

Benjamin's full story is in the spring issue of "Life Lines" on line at: [resources.elca.org/](http://resources.elca.org/)



## WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM - JUNE 2026

**WHAT IS JUNE?** Spiritually June encompasses themes of growth, illumination and transformation. It's a time for personal development and connection with nature as it is marked by the longer days of summer and vibrant energy. It encourages embracing new beginnings and shedding old patterns. The longer days symbolize clarity in thoughts and life paths. It is a time to deepen spiritual connections with oneself and the environment. Overall, June serves as a powerful gateway for spiritual reflection and transformation.

The Rebecca/Anna & Sarah Circles will meet on June 11th at 1PM in the library, The lesson is taken from the Summer 2026 issue of *Gather*: Lesson One: I am created in God's Image: Scripture invites all people - regardless of gender - to freedom, community and vocation. Please join us!

**SUMMER BIBLE STUDY:** We will again be having a summer Bible study at the Lehto home sometime in August. Watch for further details. We will be studying Lessons #2 and #3 in the Summer 2026 issue of *Gather*.

'TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME!' WELCA is honoring the Men of Bethlehem with lunch, games and prizes on June 7th beginning at noon. Please remind your men to sign up and join us. We can also use help with setting up the Fellowship Hall Sunday morning and also clean up afterward.

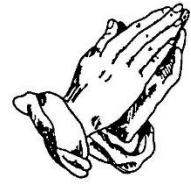
Contact Nancy Ammann

And be sure to wish him a HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - New Member 10am - Worship Service	1 9am - Planting at 9am - VBS Registration 3pm - Chair Yoga	2 Bulletin articles due today 9am - Property Work 10:45am - Staff Meeting	3 11:30am - Music 1:30pm - Zoom Book &	4 5:30pm - ACA	5 6pm - LifeRing Recovery	6 8pm - AA
7 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service 12pm - WELCA Men's	8 Steve's Birthday: Steve 11am - Finance Cmte. 3pm - Chair Yoga	9 Bulletin articles due today 9am - Property Work 1pm - Friendship Bible 6pm - Y2A/Christian Ed 6:30pm - Executive	10 11:30am - Music 1:30pm - Zoom Book &	11 9am - Baby Pantry Setup 10am - Baby Pantry-FH 1pm - Rebecca 5:30pm - ACA 6:30pm - Hike at Empire	12 6pm - LifeRing Recovery	13 7pm - Contra Dance -
14 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Traditional 11:15am - Congregational 12:15pm - Burning the	15 3pm - Chair Yoga 3:30pm - Grief Group	16 Bulletin articles due today 9am - Property Work 6:30pm - Council Meeting	17 11:30am - Music	18 5:30pm - ACA	19 STAR articles due today 10am - Sew Pieciful 1pm - Lehto SG - Library 6pm - LifeRing Recovery	20 8pm - AA
21 HAPPY FATHER'S DAY 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Appreciation	22 3pm - Chair Yoga	23 Bulletin articles due today 9am - Property Work 11am - Prayer in the	24 11:30am - Music	25 5:30pm - ACA	26 6pm - LifeRing Recovery	27 8pm - AA
28 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Baptism - Johnny 10am - Worship Service 1pm - Community Meal at 7pm - TC Sings!	29 3pm - Chair Yoga 6pm - Creation Care 6pm - New Life Meeting	30 Bulletin articles due today 9am - Property Work	1 11:30am - Music	2 5:30pm - ACA	3 6pm - LifeRing Recovery	4 8pm - AA

## Health Concerns\*



# The Power of Prayer

*Mary Woodring, Jerry Hill,  
Richard Fernholz, Lee,  
Judy Fenton, Julie Lapeer, Lynn,  
Cindy Hitesman, Pr. Zack Nelson,  
John Stretlien, Harper Wiemerslage,  
Roy DuMond, Cheryl, Patti, Sharon,  
Julie Barrett, Steve, Christine,  
Sherry, John Block, Bob, Pat Burton,  
Norm Fred, Chris, Shelley Miller,  
Kyle, Janet, Cheryl, Pat, Gretchen,  
Matthew, Mike & Fredricka*

**G. T. Pavilions:** Shelley Miller

**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.

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### **Prayer Requests:**

- Prayer Chain:** Please contact Jan Stretlien at [jstretlien@gmail.com](mailto:jstretlien@gmail.com) or 231-947-3265
- Prayers read from the altar:** Please call the Administrative Assistant in the church office 231-947-9880 or email [admin@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org)

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Are you checking for the latest BLC updates at: [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org)?

You saw Norm and others take the photos...be sure you see them at [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org)!

Good News...and great news...at [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org)...

**Looking for a link to last month's full Council minutes?**  
Type this address/url into your web browser to get the latest approved minutes from Council (or call the office for a copy:

**[bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes](http://bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes)**

# BLC Contacts

## **Church Office**

Pastor Paul Busekist	<a href="mailto:paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org">paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Admin. Asst., Barbara Oster	<a href="mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org">admin@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson	<a href="mailto:bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org">bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Anthony Bero, Music Director	<a href="mailto:bero.tony@gmail.com">bero.tony@gmail.com</a>
Alanna Steffunick-Boomer, Ministry Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Alanna.Steffunick@bethlehemtc.org">Alanna.Steffunick@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.bethlehemtc.org">www.bethlehemtc.org</a>

## **Church Council**

Gail Goldsmith, President	<a href="mailto:president.council@bethlehemtc.org">president.council@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Maureen Bauer, Vice President	<a href="mailto:vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org">vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org</a>
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Jana Rockne, Personnel	<a href="mailto:personnel.committee@bethlehemtc.org">personnel.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Jana Rockne, Safety & Security	
Bethany Uhl, Stewardship	<a href="mailto:stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org">stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Denice Bossardet, Worship and Music	<a href="mailto:worshipmusic.committee@bethlehemtc.org">worshipmusic.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Tina Dohm, Youth/Y2A	<a href="mailto:youth.committee@bethlehemtc.org">youth.committee@bethlehemtc.org</a>
Pastor Paul Busekist	<a href="mailto:paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org">paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org</a>

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

Lots of cool information inside  
Pr Paul's Page  
Council President's notes  
Council officers and committee liaisons  
Book Club News  
New Members  
Monthly Prayer Time  
Safe Harbor This Month  
Notes from Alanna with Knights & Castles at VBS  
Christian Education News  
Creation Care News  
New Life Together  
Financial News  
ELCA Global Links  
WELCA Page  
The Power of Prayer  
Church Calendar  
And much more!

