

October 2026



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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



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

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

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

Worship Times:

Sunday: 10 am Modern Worship with
Traditional service on the 2nd Sunday.
Livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube
Sunday School/Adult Education: 9:15am
Third Thursday Worship: 7:00pm
Nursery open during worship service

Follow the STAR to Bethlehem!

Our Mission:

We 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.



“By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?”

- Chief priests and elders, to Jesus, MT 21:23



Dear Bethlehem sisters and brothers:

In this past week's reflection from *Christ in Our Home*, the author of Sunday's devotion recounts a time when as a hospital chaplain, she was confronted by a physician who wanted her to call security to usher out a "large, loud family" grieving the loss of their loved one. She instead found them all a private room to gather, mourn and support one another in the ways they knew how. "I'm a chaplain, I know these things," she boldly told the doctor. And the chaplain was right. Simply creating a space and walking with that family met their needs.

As ELCA Lutherans, we too are faithfully called to do and be "God's work, [with] Our Hands" and ask God to "make [us] instruments of peace." How might we also claim the authority Christ gave us to care for those in need? Perhaps we can start October the same way we did last year: **Sunday, October 4th, our confirmation students invite you to also do the CROP Walk at 1:00 pm in Northport to increase hunger awareness** (and raise funds for all who can contribute.) We will gather at the gazebo in the south marina in Northport for a short and flat, 1-mile walk and will join our friends from Trinity Church, Northport, who host this group. If you wish to support the contribution made for CROP Walk this year by the Good Samaritan fund, you can write a check to Bethlehem with "Good Samaritan Fund" in the memo. But most importantly, we hope you can simply walk with us – with or without a donation...as our presence, and creating a space for a voice to end hunger, is enough.

Sunday the 4th of October is also the time we do two other things: (1) honoring God's Creation (and creatures!) with a virtual "Blessing of the Pets" during worship and (2) marking the first official day for Bethlehem folks to turn in pledges for our Capital Campaign entitled "Renewing Our Foundation." Check your bulletins and church emails for more information. The Campaign team is hoping for 100% participation, regardless of pledge size. Involvement is key.

And between the beginning of October and the annual Craft and Art Fair on Saturday, November 7th, we have much to boldly speak for...whether it is honoring the faithfully departed, or considering our November mission trip with Habitat for Humanity (Nov 10-14), we are called to use the "authority" of the Gospel for all good things. God is good! All the time!

Shalom...Pastor Paul

Greetings,

As the warm colors of autumn start to peak out in the trees, I find myself longing for the tranquility of fall. I grew up in Minnesota where the four seasons are as pronounced as they are here in Traverse City. Those of us who winter in a northern climate know that the lack of sunshine gets old, yet we anticipate the change with relief and gratitude. This is a busy fall for BLC – our activities are plentiful! Whether you are here to enjoy the full magnitude of our changing colors or are packing up for your winter home, may you carry our mission and vision in your heart. And know that God is with us always.

"The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you all." — 2 Timothy 4:22

Jana Rockne

FELLOWSHIP REPORT

The Third Thursday on October 15th will be a celebration of Oktoberfest and, of course, the birth of the Reformation. Join us for a joyful Oktoberfest meal at 5:45 PM prior to the service. We're gathering around the table for good food, good fellowship, and a taste of German tradition. Peg Peppler is bringing Sauerbraten and Spaetzle. We need YOU to help complete the feast! I am asking all you wonderful cooks to please sign up to bring your favorite German dishes—bratwurst, soft pretzels, German potato salad, red cabbage, apple strudel, soft pretzels, or any family favorite. A sign-up sheet is available in the Gathering Space. Come hungry, come ready to share, and come celebrate God's good gifts with us! Questions? Please contact Peg Peppler by e mail at peppler6088@gmail.com or call/text to 585-414-8200.

Bethlehem is hosting a Trunk or Treat for community families on Sunday, October 25th from 3:00-4:30pm! We are looking for people to sign up to hand out treats from the trunk of their car. Decorating is optional but very welcomed - as simple or elaborate as you like, just nothing scary! The type of treats you hand out is up to you as well. Sign up in the narthex if you are able to participate, and even if you can't, we hope you'll come just to join in the fun! Reach out to Alanna at alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org if you have any questions!



Grief Group meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month from 3:30-4:30 in the gathering space. The group will meet on October 5th and October 19th. Any questions contact Peggy Burns 232-392-6913.

Chair Yoga meets at 3:00pm on Mondays. It is \$5 per class. If anyone has questions or need more info regarding chair yoga they can email betsymorley@charter.net.

♪ **Bethlehem is currently posting a part-time job for a new Choir Director.** The position requires some of the following: 1.) Plan the choir music for regularly planned worship services 2.) Demonstrate piano proficiency 3.) With the choir, coordinate music themes, dates, and conduct practices and performances. For a complete job description and application, contact Barbara in the church office during normal office hours or Maureen Bauer at personnel.committee@bethlehem.org

Sunday School and Sunday's Adult Education hold their classes at 9:15am on Sunday.



The October XYZ Potluck & Presentation has been rescheduled to this Friday, October 2nd, due to other church activities.

Because of this change, Tom Rockne will now present for us in November, and we have a new presentation for October - the son and daughter-in-law of our own Jim Hutchison! Shari and Hutch began their dream RV road trip in the fall of 2012 with their restored and solar powered vintage "canned ham" camper...and they aren't showing any signs of slowing down! What began as a break from careers and home ownership transformed into a passion for simple sustainable living and exploring the natural world. We hope you can join us at noon on October 2nd for the potluck lunch, followed by the wonderful presentation. Adults of all ages are welcome!

Creation Care Opportunity: The Community Garden, at Faith Reformed, is hosting a Fall Worker Bee in order to "put the garden to bed" for the season. This is taking place on Saturday, October 10 from 9a-12p. If you are interested in joining, please contact Tina Dohm 231-218-1915 so we can provide a head count. This is an incredible ministry. As of September 17, 2026 we have provided 1074 pounds of produce for people in need, in our community!! Hope to see you there.

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 next date is September 22nd.** Please join us. If any questions, please contact Peggy Burns at 231-392-6913 or cobaltblues2003@yahoo.com

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 **Wednesday.**

Beginning with Wednesday, September. 9th, Phil will work these days.

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.

Habitat for Humanity opportunity. Looking for 4-6 members of BLC to join with St. Luke's Lutheran in Grand Rapids on a trip to Sebring Florida to build houses. Dates are Nov 8-14. (Help with BLC craft fair on 11/7). No carpentry skills needed; only a love for our less fortunate neighbors. Trip cost is approximately \$1200 which includes airfare, hotel, meals, transportation and fun! Contact Fred Reyelts: **text 616-560-2861** or reyeltsf@gmail.com



Handbell rehearsals will return in

November: Practice for ringing handbells will resume on Mon, Nov 16 at 3:30 and continue through Dec. If you have thought this is something you want to try please contact Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net

New Life Together Team

We had a great time with our Women's Wined Down Wednesday at Colibri Wine Bar. Its atmosphere was welcoming and enjoyable. Tapas was overflowing with wonderful food, great company, not to mention a fabulous sunset was experienced from West Bay! We met on September 21 to plan more. We are open to hearing suggestions for things to do. Please let us know —Peggy Burns 213.392.6913.

Nature / Animal Photos Needed! Alanna needs your pretty pictures to create videos for the Gathering Space TV! Nature photos, animal photos, anything pretty and pleasing to look at! Photos must be in JPEG or similar format, preferably horizontal orientation, and must be good quality. The more photos submitted, the better! Credit will be given for the photos unless you wish to remain anonymous. Please email photos to Alanna at alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org Thank you!



A big thank you to all who have turned in Olesons' slips. On June 18, 2026, we received a check from Olesons for \$211.15 for a total so far this year of \$505.39. Thank you so much to everyone who turned in their Olesons receipts. Also, the area for the Olesons' receipts is in the lower cabinets below the mailboxes (under the last names beginning A-C). 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



Bethlehem's Blessing of the Animals will be held during our October 4th worship service. This will be done virtually so please email a photo(s) to paul.busekist@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 10/7, 10/14, 10/21, 10/28 —The Pub TC, Traverse City, 7:00pm

NEW MEMBERS: If you are interested in membership, please contact the office or membership co-chairs Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net or John Halstead at marilynjohnstc@hotmail.com

Social Ministry/Outreach update It has been decided that this group is choosing an approach like the "no-huddle offense" in football. We will have "**no-meeting service projects**", meaning NO EXTRA MEETINGS other than the area(s) you are serving. Everything has been running smoothly, so, if you feel called to help in one of these areas, please contact the leader of these groups listed alphabetically: **Baby pantry (2nd Thurs)-** Patty Leibenguth **Food pantry-Diane Cunningham** **Freedom Builders (July)-** Carl Lehto or Jim Hutchison **Grace Community meals (4th Sunday)** -Cindy Monroe or Jim Hutchison **Habitat for Humanity-Fred Reyelts** **Safe Harbor-Tom Rockne** **Salvation Army Bell Ringing (Dec.)-** Carl Lehto or Jim Hutchison **Super Saturday (Feb)-** Nancy Ammann

Did you know that BLC has a Facebook group? This is an online forum where we can chat, share upcoming event information, get to know each other, etc! This group is just getting going, but we would love to have more members join - the more the merrier! The group is called 'Bethlehem Lutheran Church New Life Together Group' and you can search it on Facebook, or let Alanna know that you would like to join and she will add you. Hope to chat with you online soon!



Book Club: We have moved to Tues! We will meet at 5:30 on Oct 27 to discuss *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah. Watch the bulletin for location. If offsite many of us car pool from BLC.

Coffee and Cookies: Our wonderful volunteers Mary Ann Tanis and Diane Cunningham have indicated a willingness to continue offering this after the Sunday service as long as there are others who also bring the goodies. Our thanks to these two women for their wonderful display of the goodies and the clean-up after. Thanks to all of you who have shared goodies, and please continue to do so.

Notes From Alanna

Trunk or Treat!

Bethlehem will be holding a community Trunk or Treat this year! We are looking for people to sign up to park their car in the BLC parking lot and hand out candy or other treats from their trunk. Decorating is optional but very welcomed - as simple or as elaborate as you'd like! I'm also open to other fun activities at the event, if anyone has any ideas!



Contra Dancing Resumes!

Bayside Travellers will be resuming their contra dances on the second Saturday of each month, beginning October 10th! Dances begin at 7pm with a beginner workshop to teach you everything you need to know - no partner or dance experience is necessary. Even if dancing isn't your thing, we always have live music and it's lots of fun to just watch. Dances are by donation - suggested \$10 / person to cover the cost of the dance. I hope to see you there!

-Alanna Steffunick-Boomer, Ministry Coordinator

Christian Education News October 2026

NOVEMBER 7th – BAKE SALE AT BLC'S ANNUAL CRAFT FAIR
Donations of baked goods would be very much appreciated!
Thank you for your support of our ministry!

BAKE SALE FUNDRAISER



October is Pastor Appreciation Month –

**Thank you Pastor,
for the word
you spread
and the lives
you touch.**

We thank Pastor Paul for all he does for BLC!



Join us for an afternoon of family fun
Sunday October 25th
3:00pm – 4:30pm

All ages are invited for treats and activities!

YOUTH IN ACTION –

Can we help spotlight
youth events in your family?
sports, band, choir, drama, etc.
Send details to Alanna
so she can spread the word!

Global Links - ELCA Missionary Conference



Earlier - in July - the ELCA's Global Mission community gathered in St. Charles, Illinois, for the 2026 Summer Missionary Conference under the theme "Multiple Voices Shared in Mission." People from all patterns of service attended, sharing meals, worship and programming. **ELCA Global Mission also welcomed eight new missionaries this summer**, serving from Liberia to Malaysia in roles such as regional representative for Central America, Central Europe teacher, pastor and lecturer, and Horizon International intern.

WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM - OCTOBER 2026



OCTOBER: Never regret a day in your life: good days give happiness, bad days give experience, worst days give lessons, and best days give memories. (Unknown)

BIBLE STUDY: The October Bible study will be taken from the Fall issue of *Gather* magazine - Session two: "A story of connection and courage: In Ruth's story God weaves love, community and promise through even the most uncertain paths." We will meet in the Fellowship Hall (**NOTE CHANGE**) on Thursday, October 15th - **NOTE DATE CHANGE!** Contact Nancy Ammann if you have questions or need a copy of the lesson. Please join us!

CHRISTMAS TEA: The Christmas Tea will be held on Sunday, December 6th. Further details coming,. Keep the date open!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
FOOD DRIVE SUNDAY 9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service 11:30am - Renewing Our 1pm - Community Meal at	2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal 3pm - Chair Yoga 5:30pm - Worship and	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters 9am - Property Work	11:30am - Music 1:30pm - Zoom Book &	5:30pm - ACA	12pm - XYZ 8pm - AA	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Craft Show 1pm - CROP Walk to End 2:30pm - Youth	2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal 3pm - Chair Yoga 3:30pm - Grief Group	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters 9am - Property Work 10:45am - Staff Meeting	11:30am - Music 1:30pm - Zoom Book &	10am - Visitation - Norm 11am - Funeral - Norm 12pm - Luncheon - Norm 5:30pm - ACA	9am - Baby Pantry Setup 10am - Baby Pantry-FH 7pm - Contra Dance by	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Traditional	9am - Mission 11am - Finance Omt. 2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal 3pm - Chair Yoga	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters 9am - Property Work 1pm - Friendship Bible 6pm - Y2A/Christian Ed 6:30pm - Executive	11:30am - Music 1:30pm - Zoom Book &	1pm - Rebecca 5:30pm - ACA 5:45pm - Third Thursday 7pm - Third Thursday	STAR articles due today 10am - Sew Pieciful 1pm - Lehto SG -	8pm - AA
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service 12:30pm - Youth	2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal 3pm - Chair Yoga 3:30pm - Grief Group 6pm - Creation Care	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters 9am - Property Work 6:30pm - Council Meeting	11:30am - Music 1:30pm - Zoom Book &	5:30pm - ACA		8pm - AA
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
FOOD DRIVE SUNDAY 9:15am - Adult Education 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service 1pm - Community Meal at 3pm - Trunk or Treat	2:30pm - Choir Rehearsal 3pm - Chair Yoga 6pm - Vision in Action	Bulletin articles due today 9am - LWR Quilters 9am - Property Work 11am - Prayer in the	11:30am - Music 1:30pm - Zoom Book &	5:30pm - ACA		8pm - AA

Health Concerns*



The Power of Prayer

*Mary Woodring, Jerry Hill,
Richard Fernholz, Lee,
Judy Fenton, Julie Lapeer, Cindy Hitesman,
John Stretlien, Harper Wiemerslage,
Roy DuMond, Patti, Sharon,
Julie Barrett, Steve, Christine,
Sherry, John Block, Bob,
Kyle, Janet, Cheryl, Pat & Bob,
Matthew, Jacque, Carmen Svalstad,
Ron & Marilyn Dork*

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

Prayer Requests:

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

Are you checking for the latest BLC updates at: www.bethlehemtc.org?

You saw Norm and others take the photos...be sure you see them at www.bethlehemtc.org!

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

Looking for a link to last month's full Council minutes?

Type this address/url into your web browser to get the latest approved minutes from Council (or call the office for a copy:

bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes

BLC Contacts

Church Office

Pastor Paul Busekist	paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org
Admin. Asst., Barbara Oster	admin@bethlehemtc.org
Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson	bookkeeper@bethlehemtc.org
Anthony Bero, Music Director	bero.tony@gmail.com
Alanna Steffunick-Boomer, Ministry Coordinator	Alanna.Steffunick@bethlehemtc.org
Website	www.bethlehemtc.org

Church Council

Jana Rockne, President	president.council@bethlehemtc.org
Bethany Uhl, Vice President	vicepresident.council@bethlehemtc.org
Nancy Pflasterer, Secretary	secretary.council@bethlehemtc.org
Dave Peppler, Treasurer	treasurer.council@bethlehemtc.org
Jim Monroe, Financial Sec.	financialsecretary.council@bethlehemtc.org
Peggy Burns, Christian Care Giving	christiancaregiving.committee@bethlehemtc.org
, Christian Ed.	christianeducation.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Dave Peppler, Fellowship	fellowship.committee@bethlehemtc.org
John Halstead, Membership/Evangelism	membershipevangelism.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Doug Cunningham, Property	property.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Jana Rockne, Personnel	personnel.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Jana Rockne, Safety & Security	
Bethany Uhl, Stewardship	stewardship.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Denice Bossardet, Worship and Music	worshipmusic.committee@bethlehemtc.org
, Youth/Y2A	youth.committee@bethlehemtc.org
Mark Fornwall, Constitution	
Scott Sorenson, Council Member	
Pastor Paul Busekist	paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org

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

Lots of cool information inside
Pr Paul's Page
Council President's notes
Council officers and committee liaisons
Handbell Choir
Book Club News
Monthly Prayer Time
Notes from Alanna
Christian Education News
Fellowship News
New Life Together
Choir Director Poistion Available
XYZ News
Habitat for Humanity News
WELCA News
ELCA Global Links
The Power of Prayer
Church Calendar
And much more!

