

February
2024

BETHLEHEM STAR
MONTHLY PUBLICATION

BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

WEBSITE
www.bethlehemstar.org

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Bayport, MN 55003

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A WORD FROM PASTOR AMY



When I was growing up, I had the privilege of being in a community where churches worked together. In particular, the various churches came together for youth retreats and mission trips. My friends who were Catholic or Methodist or Assembly of God all participated in retreats and trips to Mexico alongside the church I attended. I also remember being one of four students who were invited by our youth minister to help start a prayer breakfast. We sat in a circle in our sanctuary- at the time it was a space that much resembles our sanctuary at Bethlehem. A few years later, there were 100 youth attending that same prayer breakfast, all kids from various youth groups and backgrounds. I was a church kid, attending and working at bible camps, helping with activities for the younger kids, and leading bible study with my peers. Church was a second home to me. It was a place and a people who told me I belonged and had something to offer. I was born into Christianity, baptized Lutheran. It is all I have ever known. But Christ and the Church continues to hold me close and draw me in even when the realities of the world and the history of Christianity makes me reel with doubt and question being associated with it. It is the relationship and community with God and God's people that convince me to stay Christian. It is the theology and faith in the grace-filled heart of God, one that chooses to love the world even as we seek to destroy it, that keeps me claiming the Christian tradition as my own. *Why are you a Christian?*

Being Christian also means making sense of Jesus and the cross, a journey we will walk together during Lent. *Jesus matters, but why exactly? For me personally, it has always been the "with-ness" of God in Jesus that makes the difference. Believing that God comes to us, chooses to suffer with humanity, shows such love for us on the cross, and walks us through to new life is a pretty radical statement of faith. But it is one that has been confirmed for me over and over in life.*

This upcoming season of Lent asks the question, "Why Jesus?" I have invited five people in our congregation to share their stories, specifically answering two questions: "Why am I a Christian?" (or still a Christian) and "Why does Jesus matter to me?" They will be sharing their stories and reasons at our Wednesday evening Lenten services. I hope you will join us, and as you do, I hope you will be encouraged in your own faith and relationship with Christ, and consider your *Why*.

Much peace to you this season,

Pastor Amy

CHURCH NEWS

Adult Forum | Coming Up: A Focus on Outreach and Ministry Areas

During the regular Adult Forum time in on Sunday mornings, we will have presentations from various groups highlighting outreach and ministry opportunities. To allow for greater participation, The Connection will be used from 10:30-11:15am. Grab your treats and coffee, sit down at a table and join the conversation!

- Feb. 11th Creation Care
- Feb. 18th The Connect Center with Cindy Parsons
- Feb. 25th Dane's Place and Housing Needs
- Mar. 3rd BLC's Foundation
- Mar. 10th Bega Kwa Bega, Tanzania Partnership

"The Holy Spirit" | Small Group Zoom / Tuesday Study

Pastor Amy leads the conversation as we take a closer look at what scripture says about the Spirit of God. All adults are welcome to participate by asking questions, offering insights, and sharing in a few practices to better understand how the Holy Spirit interacts with us, the Church. Our new Sunday evening Zoom Small Group Conversation follows the same outline.

There are two options to join the conversation through February 11. Join whichever time best fits your schedule for the week!

SUNDAY EVENING ZOOM | 6:30pm | Contact Pastor Amy for the Zoom Link

- Session 4 February 4 at 6:30pm
- Session 5 February 11 at 6:30pm

TUESDAYS | 10am | in person @ Croixdale Senior Living Center, 750 HWY-95

- Session 4 February 6
- Session 5 February 13

Sunday Hospitality Volunteers

Please sign up in the Connection or contact Julie Grams or Constance Nelson.

View openings via Bethlehem Star calendar @ <https://www.bethlehemstar.org>

Volunteers bring treats, set-up & serve them along with coffee, tea, & juice after our Sunday Worship, then stay to tidy up The Connection area.

CONTACT CONSTANCE NELSON OR JULIE GRAMS TO SIGN UP

- February 4** Sharon Knox
JudySmith
- February 11** Beth Burns
Julie Grams
- February 18** The Harris Girls
- February 25** Ginny & Dan Peulen

Fundraisers | OnGoing

RAISERIGHT GIFT CARDS

Pre-purchase Gift Cards to give or to use yourself for everyday shopping.

Scan QR Code or go to <https://www.raiseright.com/enroll?enrollCode=3CDI4Z9HKW27>



GOT SNEAKERS

We are collecting SNEAKERS in the receptacle located near the Sanctuary.

Office Notes | contact Lori @ office.blcbayport@gmail.com

Altar Flower Orders Due: Tuesday at Midnight the previous week

Weekly Announcements Due: Thursdays at 8am

Monthly Newsletters Due: the 23rd of the month prior to publication

Altar Flowers

Sign up is located by the office or contact Lori @ office.blcbayport@gmail.com

BLC Financial Snapshot | December 2023

	December 2023				December YTD [Month 3]			
	Revenue / Expense		Variance		Revenue / Expense		Variance	
	Actual	Plan	\$	%	Actual	Plan	\$	%
INCOME								
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 37,156	\$ 31,610	\$ 5,546	18%	\$ 83,247	\$ 78,029	\$ 5,218	7%
EXPENSE								
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 24,245	\$ 27,339	\$ 3,094	11%	\$ 75,191	\$ 75,602	\$ 411	1%
NET INCOME / (LOSS)	\$ 12,911	\$ 4,271	\$ 8,640	27%	\$ 8,056	\$ 2,427	\$ 5,629	7%
Line of Credit (current balance)			\$ 16,599					
Church Mortgage (current balance)			\$ 109,626					

Direct Online Giving

Scan QR Code



BLC Website <https://www.bethlehemstar.org/>

E-Board & Council Meetings

Executive Board Meeting Thursday, Feb 8 @ 6:00pm

Council Meeting Thursday, Feb 15 @ 6:30pm

Worship Broadcast Ch. 18 VACTV

Wednesdays at 6pm & Midnight

Thursday at 6am, Noon

THANK YOU FROM VALLEY OUTREACH



A heartfelt thank you from Valley Outreach to our BLC community for donating more than \$2600.00 in 2023 towards supporting our neighbors in the Valley!

Children, Youth, & Families



SUNDAY SCHOOL

All Kids pre-K thru 5th grade
meet upstairs in the Sunday School Room on Sundays from 10:15 -11:00am.

Feb 4	Queen Esther
Feb 11	Daniel and the Lions
Feb 18	No Sunday School
Feb. 25	The Prodigal Son

Contact Ali Staloch at cyf.blchayport@gmail.com



Confirmation

Wednesdays
5pm Dinner 5:30-7 Class

- Mentor Dinner Feb. 7 @ 5pm
- Mentoring Begins Feb 14
- Check in Feb. 21 @ 5pm
- Hunger Games: February 23-24
6:30pm - 9am

Contact Jenny Schoolman at mjschoolman@comcast.net with any questions.

BLC Women | Thursday, February 8 @ 10am

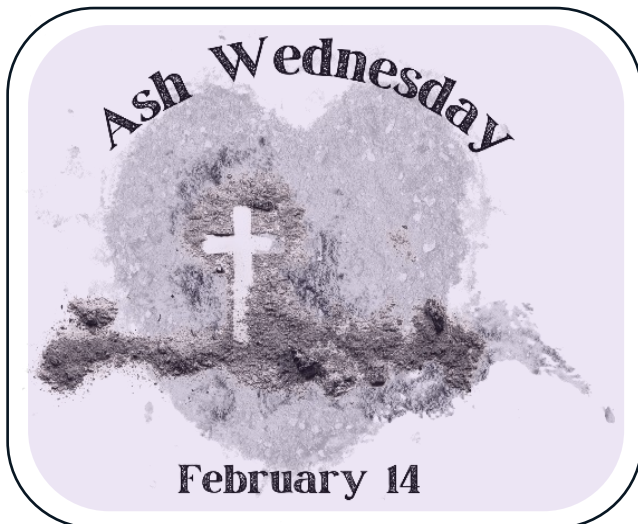
BLCW will be held on Thursday, February 8 beginning at 10am. We welcome all women with study, service, fellowship and treats! Contact Wilma McGowan for more information.

BLC Quilters | Thursday, February 15 @ 9am

Quilting will be held from 9am - Noon. No experience needed. We will tie quilts and share in fellowship and treats! Contact Mary Olson, Mary Trenda or Wilma McGowan for more information.



ASH WEDNESDAY | Noon and 7pm worship



On Wednesday, February 14, we will offer a short liturgy and disposition of ashes at Noon and a full worship service at 7pm.

Join us for whichever service best fits your schedule.

LENT

Why Jesus?

As part of our Wednesday evening Lenten worship, individuals from the congregation will be sharing their "Why Jesus?" stories. They have been tasked with answering two main questions, "Why am I a Christian?" (or still a Christian) and "Why does Jesus matter to me?"

Come, listen and reflect on stories of faith on Wednesdays from 7:00-7:40pm, beginning February 21st and going through March 20th.

- Feb. 21st Jenny Schoolman
- Feb. 28th Tony Lesicka
- Mar. 6th Ali Staloch
- Mar. 13th Daniel Baumgartner
- Mar. 20th Paul Goulette

Music | Rehearsal Schedule Feb. 14 - Mar. 20

WEDNESDAYS

5:30 - 6:15 pm Handbell Choir rehearsal

7:45 - 8:30 pm Chapel Choir rehearsal

MONDAYS

6:00 - 7:00 pm BOH rehearsal (every other week)

Soup Supper | 6pm Wednesdays Feb. 21 - Mar. 20

Invite Friends and Neighbors! We will gather to enjoy a simple meal together before evening worship beginning February 21. To sign up to bring soup to share, look for the board in The Connection, or contact Julie Grams or Constance Nelson.



HOLY WEEK

March 24 **Palm Sunday** Worship at 8:30am
10am Ecumenical Palm Procession across the old Stillwater Lift Bridge.

March 28 **Maundy Thursday** Worship 7pm

March 29 **Good Friday** Worship 7pm

March 31 **Easter** Worship at 8:00am & 10:00am **Easter Breakfast** between services

*In Partnership with God,
with each Other,
with the World!*



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