



# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

## Newsletter

### August 2020

Dear Bethlehem Family and Friends,

What an exciting time it is to be a part of the Bethlehem Family! As we edge closer to back to school and back to routine for many of our young families, we are also getting closer to having a full staff again! **We are excited to announce that we have hired 4 new staff members who will be starting throughout the month of August.** I invite you to find the page in this newsletter that tells you more about them, and tells you how you can meet them and welcome them to Bethlehem!

As we head into fall, we continue to face a lot unknowns and things will probably look different...whether that is due to pandemic or new staff and their new ideas. We are, as a staff, embracing the verse Second Corinthians 5:17 which says **“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”** We are excited to embrace the traditions that have brought Bethlehem to this point and also to try some new things as a way to help us all move out of our comfort zones and deepen our faith and our relationships with one another. We look forward to the ways that the pandemic pushes us to try new things. Some of those new things will stick around, some will be a one time try. Some will go well, some will fail, but we call it all learning and growth and are excited for the adventure.

On that note of trying new things, or doing some of our traditions in a new way, we need your help. Even with the cracker-jack staff we are hiring, we can't do all the ministry of Bethlehem. So we need you. We need you to think about what gives you the most energy, hope, and joy and we invite you to be a part of it. **Is there some ministry at Bethlehem that you have always wanted to be a part of?** Now it your chance! **Is there an idea you have always wanted to try here?** We can't wait to hear about it and help you carry out your vision.

These are the days for hopes and dreams. These are the days to deepen our faith and our relationships. These are the days to look around and see that God is at work in each and every one of us. Thank you for the honor of being your pastor through these last 7 months. And thank you for your support, encouragement, and prayers along the way. **These are good, growing days dear ones, and I CAN'T WAIT to see where God is leading us next!**

Your partner on the journey, *Pastor Amy Eisenmann*

**P.S. Make sure to join us for Back to School Perks the morning of August 24, whether you still have kids in school or not as a chance to meet many of our new staff members! Look inside for more info!**



Bethlehem is excited to announce that we will be adding 4 new staff members to our team during August. Here's a bit about who they are and how you can meet them!



Hello Bethlehem! My name is **Sarah Cohen** and I am so excited to join the team as the **Youth and Education Director!** I received my B.A. in Family Services and M.A. in Leisure, Youth, and Human Services from UNI, and am excited to be back to work on my Ed.D. in Secondary Education: Student Affairs and coursework in Recreation. My husband, Richard, and I have three adorable furbabies: Ginger, Harvey, and Ruthie that we enjoy going on walks with and bringing to the park. I have been active in church since I was little and fell in love with youth ministry at a young age when working at summer camps and other youth programs. I am excited to get a chance to be a part of the Youth and Education Program at Bethlehem and become involved in the church community! **Sarah's first day will be August 24, and you can meet her at our Back to School Perks Coffee Drive Thru event!**

Hi my name is **Seth Bullerman** and I'm super excited for the opportunity to join the team as the **IT Director** and to get the chance to meet and connect with everyone here. I am currently going into my 5th and final year at UNI pursuing a B.A. in Interactive Digital Studies along with a minor in Computer Science. My mother, Kari, and younger sister, Maggie, are also currently enrolled at UNI. My father, Jeremey, is a financial advisor at FRA in Waterloo and a very active member in the church community in Cedar Falls. I also have an older brother, Ben, who lives in Waterloo with his wife, Grace, as well as a younger brother Gabe. I have a long history with volunteering at church through multiple mission trips, being a VBS leader, and working in the sound and video booth. Bethlehem seemed like the perfect opportunity for me to get to further my professional career and join an incredibly accepting and welcoming community. I look forward to getting the chance to meet the fellow members and staff here at Bethlehem and hope to form great relationships along the way. **Seth's first day will be August 3. Stay tune for our new website coming from Seth this fall!**



Hello again Bethlehem! My name is Heather Hurd-Schneider and I am the very excited to begin my new position as the Fellowship and Outreach Director and to be able to continue to work with the wonderful people at BLC. I graduated from UNI with a degree in social work, and was previously the Ministry Coordinator here. I enjoy movies, reading, watching my children participate in various activities, digital scrapbooking, and spending time with family and friends. I lives in Waterloo with her family. (husband Jason, children Camden, Cael, and Larissa and labradoodle Libby) **Heather's first day will be August 4. Come to the office on Tuesday's or Thursdays and meet Heather if you haven't already!**

My name is **Cayla Morris** and I live in Independence with my husband Travis, and I am will be the **Office Manager**. I am step mother to 2 teenage boys and have 4 fur babies! I have 2 big dogs named Nala and Cooper, and 2 large cats named Darla and Dottie. Our house is always full of life and I love the noise. I love to be outside; I enjoy hunting and fishing and taking out our ATV out on the trails. I enjoy golfing, archery and spending time with my family. My favorite season is fall and I enjoy bonfires and smores. I am very excited to be joining the team at Bethlehem and cannot wait to start! **Cayla's first day will be August 10 and she will be also able to meet you at Back to School Perks on August 24.**





Hello! Please allow me to introduce myself to those of you I don't know. I am Kurt Leistikow and I am pleased to have been chosen to help lead Bethlehem through the next year as the Congregational Council President. First a little bit about my family. We have been members here for about 20 years. I live in Greenhill Village just south of the church with my wife Jenifer and our two children, Jackson and Sabrina. Jackson will be a sophomore at UNI and Sabrina is heading to The University of Iowa in a few weeks. This will make Jenifer and I officially empty nesters, unless you count our Labradoodle, Buster! **Life is full of change, nerve wracking and exciting all at the same time, but we are ready to meet it head on and make the best of what God has in store for us.**

Life at Bethlehem is full of change as well. Pastor Amy is still in her first year with us and still getting to know our church family while we are all struggling with all of the side effects of Covid-19. The council has implemented structure and staff changes trying to better equip our congregation with the tools it needs to continue to "share the bread of life with a hungry world" in line with the congregation's goals and desires. Our Bethlehem family also knows that change can be a little nerve wrecking and exciting all at the same time, but **we are ready to meet it head on and make the best of what God has in store for us.**

While we were, unfortunately, unable to meet in person for our June quarterly meeting and follow up Q&A session, we have held a couple web based meetings to roll out those new structure changes. Some members have asked if those changes were allowed under the terms of the Bethlehem Constitution. The answer is yes. Our constitution, which is consistent with the ELCA model Constitution, under Section 18.02, allows the congregational council to make those structure changes with a 2/3 vote. The vote was unanimous. Additionally, some people asked about the minutes of the council meetings; these are always available to review at the church office, but, for security reasons, they are not published on our website. I truly understand that all these changes can seem overwhelming and they can have a huge effect on those impacted directly. **My thoughts and prayers go out to all of those directly affected or hurting because of these changes and I ask the congregation for understanding and patience for the entire council and Pastor Amy as we work through these changes.**

While change can be hard, change can also be necessary. Please know **these are extremely exciting times for Bethlehem.** We had a large number of very qualified applicants for staffing positions. I know our new staff members, with God's help and guidance, will help Bethlehem to reach and connect with even more families. I look forward continuing to share in the good news with you throughout the year. Thank you for allowing me to serve you.

Sincerely,

Kurt R Leistikow, Congregational Council President



## Bethlehem Lutheran Church

# COVID-19 REOPENING STRATEGY

This four-phased response plan is based on the local COVID-19 status as defined by the Black Hawk County Health Department. Please [click here](#) to check the daily status of Black Hawk County and learn more about the classification system used to communicate the local status of the COVID-19 outbreak.

### Phase 1: Response level: **HIGH** for Black Hawk County

- Online streaming and posting of Sunday services to website
- Church building closed to outside groups/meetings/activities
- Church staff will be encouraged to work from home when possible
- No visits to hospitals or senior care facilities will be made in this phase

### Phase 2: Response level: **MODERATE** for Black Hawk County

- Online streaming and posting of Sunday services to website
- Outdoor, drive-in service on Sunday mornings may be available
- Church building closed to outside groups/meetings
- Church staff may ask to work from home when possible
- Limited visits to hospitals or senior care facilities will be made in this phase, based on guidelines from facilities
- Weddings and funerals may be held based on pastor and family discretion

### Phase 3: Response level: **ELEVATED** for Black Hawk County for 14 consecutive days

- Bethlehem may resume in-person worship with **strict** social distancing protocols, still adhering to large gathering restrictions as directed
- Church office will be open for regular office hours
- Sunday School, camps, and organized youth activities **may** resume with strict social distancing
- Online streaming and posting of Sunday services to website
- Church building may be open to outside group meetings - mask wear and social distancing highly suggested
- Visits to hospitals and senior care facilities may resume, as allowed by facility
- Weddings and funerals may be held with **strict** social distancing protocols in place

### Phase 4: Response level: **LOW** for Black Hawk County for 14 consecutive days

- Bethlehem may resume in-person worship with moderate social distancing protocols, still adhering to large gathering restrictions remaining in place
- Church office will be open for regular office hours
- Sunday School, camps, and organized youth activities may resume with social distancing
- Online streaming and posting of Sunday services to website
- Fellowship time and activities may resume with social distancing protocols
- Church building may be open to outside group meetings - mask wear and social distancing encouraged
- Visits to hospitals and senior care facilities will resume
- Weddings and funerals may be held with social distancing protocols in place

The decision of when Bethlehem may resume a “normal” Sunday morning schedule hinges on the health of our community. The situation is fluid, and the health and safety of the congregation is our priority. Each week the Bethlehem Church Council, Pandemic Response team, and staff will continue to review the health data for Black Hawk County. Thank you for helping to keep everyone as safe as possible.



There have been a lot of questions lately about our church nursery and how it will work when the building re-opens. Your church staff are excited about some new and exciting things coming down the pike for our littlest friends and we wanted to share them with you.

When we first return to worship (at the Black Hawk County Covid-19 Elevated Level, the nursery will remain closed. **Once Black Hawk County Covid 19 response levels are low, the nursery will be open for use on Sunday mornings.** We encourage families to bring their children to worship whenever possible, but we also recognize that everyone has days where they need some space to move and play. The nursery will be open during all Sunday morning worship services once the Covid 19 response levels are low, and will welcome infants and toddlers up through the age of 3. **A closed-circuit television will allow you to view and listen to the worship service while you give your child some room to stretch and play.** Our hope in having worship on the tv while your child plays is that even in play they will begin to learn the rhythms and sounds of worship. Children using the church nursery need to be with a parent or guardian. Again, our hope would be that all children feel welcome in worship. **We are working on integrating new pieces into the worship service that will allow your kids to be more involved. In worship.** Please feel free to ask Pastor Amy for more information on some of the new kid-friendly pieces coming to worship.



A new ministry at Bethlehem is also beginning related to helping families with young children! **We are beginning a pew parent ministry!** :) We recognize that for families of more than one child, sometimes it helps to have another set of hands. So those of you without kiddos who love kiddos and would like to help, can sign up to be pew parents. **Pew parents will wear a button that lets parents know that they are available to help.** Whether that is to sit with your family at church, or run and grab something for you (a kids bulletin, a worship bag, paper towels. etc), or just someone that you can sit by that you know will be fine with wiggly,

giggly kiddos in the pews, we hope that this will let parents know that they aren't alone in raising their children in the church.

Did you know that each one of us has a role in raising kids in the church? Even when we don't have children? In the baptismal service, the congregation promises to support and pray for our children as they grow in the faith. We are not doing this alone, but as an entire church family. **We want all of our members, from newborns to elderly to know that there is a space for them at Bethlehem.** We look forward to growing into these new programs together, and learning how we can better support ALL the families of this congregation.

**For more information on the pew parent program, or to sign up to become a pew parent, please call the church office at 266-3541.**



**We love our kids!**



School will soon be open and despite the pandemic the Service Council will continue our annual backpack project with Lincoln Elementary School. With so many unknowns regarding school we are changing our project. We have obtained a Thrivent Action Grant to purchase back packs. Rather than pull tabs with a supply to purchase we are asking for monetary donations. We will collect donations then purchase gift cards to give to each teacher to use to assist students in need of supplies. **We are asking you to place your donation in the offering plate or box located next to the south church door.** Service Council thanks you for your generosity and ask that donations be made **by August 16th.**



### Holy Communion Options During Pandemic

1. Call the church office to set up a time and Pastor Amy can bring socially distanced communion to you and your family or friends at your home.
2. Grab your friends and neighbors and set up a time with the church office to have your own communion service with Pastor presiding at Bethlehem's outdoor worship space.
3. Refrain from communion until we are able to have it as a congregation again.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING ONLINE

#### Wednesday:

Coffee with the Pastor 10:00 am on Zoom

#### Sunday:

Worship & Sunday School Opening posted on YouTube and Facebook

10:00 am Drive-In Worship

### BETHLEHEM STAFF

Church phone: 319-266-3541

#### Pastor Amy Eisenmann

Pastor Amy's cell phone: 218-290-3982  
pastoramy@bethlehemcf.net

#### Cayla Morris- Office Manager (starts Aug 10)

office@bethlehemcf.net

#### Heather Hurd-Schneider (starts Aug 4)

Director of Fellowship and Outreach  
heather@bethlehemcf.net

#### Seth Bullerman-IT Director (starts Aug 4)

seth@bethlehemcf.net

#### Sarah Cohen (starts August 24)

Director of Youth and Education  
sarah@bethlehemcf.net

#### Hudson Lourenco - Organist

#### Patty Nelson-Custodian



2020-20201

### CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Kurt Leistikow - President  
319-269-7178

Kent Anderson-Vice President  
319-290-4866

Jill Schulte- Treasurer  
319-290-5725

Mindy Fisher - Secretary  
319-290-4365

Mardy Holst: 319-277-0328

Reed Hunemuller: 319-277-6381

Brendan Alexander: 319-290-1237



### GIVING MADE EASY!

Scan the QR code with your smart phone to share your offering with Bethlehem.

4 new staff are on their way to Bethlehem, and we are  
electing new council and endowment members!  
For more info, look inside this newsletter!

VOLUME 55 ISSUE 7 July 27, 2020

#### WHAT IS HAPPENING IN PERSON?

Drive-In Worship in the Bethlehem parking lot on Sundays at 10:00 am.

Church office returns to regular hours beginning August 10.

#### 1st Annual Back to School Perks!



Excited to go back to school? Excited to meet the new staff? After you drop your kids at school **on August 24, come drive through the Bethlehem parking lot for a free cup of coffee and a treat.** All are welcome for free coffee and goodies and a chance to meet our new church staff! **Coffee will be served from the start of school until 10 am.**

Our Pastor  
**Rev. Amy Eisenmann**  
**(218) 290-3982 cell phone**  
**(319) 266-3541 Church Office**  
**[pastoramy@bethlehemcf.net](mailto:pastoramy@bethlehemcf.net)**

Our website:  
**[www.bethlehemcf.org](http://www.bethlehemcf.org)**

Our YouTube Channel:  
**Bethlehem Lutheran CF**

Our Facebook page:  
**[www.facebook.com/  
Bethlehem-Lutheran-Church-  
ELCA-451552121584266](https://www.facebook.com/Bethlehem-Lutheran-Church-ELCA-451552121584266)**

Our Instagram page:  
**[@bethlehemcf](https://www.instagram.com/bethlehemcf)**