



# **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

## **December 2020 Newsletter**

Bethlehem Family and Friends,

As we enter more deeply into this year's Advent season, I wonder if you are feeling like I am. This year, I feel the waiting time is deeper. That the longing for celebration is bigger. That the desire to get together and proclaim Christ in the midst of these dark days is even stronger. At this point it is looking like this will be a Christmas to remember because it might be a Christmas apart. So I wanted to offer you some ways that you too can change your traditions of parties and gatherings into a tradition of focusing on the true reason for the season.

**Sundays during Advent our theme is "Do Not Be Afraid"**. We invite you to join us online for Advent worship each weekend. Wednesday nights we will be sharing a sermon that the synod is putting together. You can also find those sermons/mediations on our church YouTube/Facebook/Website pages.

**December 13 we will be having a Quiet Christmas service online in the afternoon.** We recognize that not everyone is ready to celebrate and be joyful this year, and that all of us have some things that we are grieving in this time apart. We invite you to join us for this service as a place to hear the words of hope, fill yourselves with peace, and listen for the coming Christ child.

**The week of December 20th there will be 5 different bedtime stories recorded for your children or grandchildren to enjoy on our YouTube channel.** Come and join me for PJ stories as we read through some of my favorite Christmas stories and get ourselves ready for Christmas this year!

**Christmas Eve we will have 2 different online options available to you.** One is a traditional **celebratory service, complete with organ music.** The second is a more **contemplative option with piano.** Both services will include "Silent Night", and a place for you to pass the light of Christ to whomever you are worshipping with.

Our one chance to gather in person this Christmas will take place at **7 pm on Christmas Eve.** We will be doing a very short gathering of "**Christmas Under the Stars**". We invite you and your family to come drive into the church parking lot and turn your radios to 103.5 where we will sing a hymn together in our cars and then share the Christmas gospel. After the reading of the gospel, we will invite those who wish to stand outside your car and light your candles (handed to you when you arrive) and sing Silent Night together. After we sing, we will get back in cars and safely head home.

However you choose to join us this Advent and Christmas season, we pray that this can be a season of hope, love, peace and joy for each of you. Thank you for walking with us even in this time apart. Thank you for being a part of our church family.

Your partner on the journey, *Pastor Amy*

"...love one another as I have loved you." John 15:12



**Thank you for your donations of fabric to help students at Threehouse Campus Ministry make tie blankets for their service project. The students are deciding where to donate the blankets between the House of Hope and the ICU at UnityPoint Health Allen Hospital.**



After much prayer and discernment, the Live Nativity Committee has decided to postpone the Live Nativity until December 4, 2021. If you would like to help plan this event for next year, please contact Heather at [heather@bethlehemcf.net](mailto:heather@bethlehemcf.net)

Did you know?... 30 Thanksgiving bags were delivered to Bethlehem members this past week! Thank you to the individuals who were able to help deliver Thanksgiving bags! We appreciate you!



Coming at the end of January!!! **Bethlehem will be having a snow day!** Fun winter activities like snowman building, a snowball fight, and much more. Students from Threehouse have been invited to join us.



Check out ways you can get involved these next few weeks on this page!



The Service Team will be doing our **Christmas Project** again this year, but in a different way. **We are asking for monetary donations to help us purchase gifts and food for 10 families from North Cedar School.** We are also doing gifts for our shut-ins at Bethlehem. Please indicate that your donations are for our Christmas project. **Thanks for helping us to serve our community!**

Our Women's Christmas Brunch will be held on Zoom on December 12 at 10:00am. Women are invited to bring a Nativity Set and share a little bit about it. Women are also welcome to enjoy their own brunch at this time. If you would like to be a part of this event, please contact Heather at [heather@bethlehemcf.net](mailto:heather@bethlehemcf.net) by December 10.



**We will gather on Zoom at noon on December 6th for our meeting to vote on the proposed budget.**

Meeting ID: 665 765 0414

PW: 906822

Need help learning how to connect on Zoom?

Call the church office!

**Calling all kids! Join Buhla and Pastor Amy for PJ Stories each day of Christmas week.** Before you head to bed, put on your PJs, and join Pastor Amy and Buhla for a **different Christmas story each night.** All you need to do is go to the church YouTube page and find the story for that night. You pick your bedtime. Stories will go online each day at 6 pm. Hope to see you at story time!





We recognize that this year the holidays may be difficult for you and your family. Some of us are grieving the loss of loved ones, or some of us are going to have to be apart from family this year. All of us have had a difficult and challenging year. **We invite you to join us for Quiet Christmas online on December 13.**

The service will include prayers, readings, music, silence, and candlelight. Take a chance to be still and just breathe. Join us and remember that no matter what is happening in the world today, Christ still comes.



### Holy Communion Options During December

- Grab your friends and neighbors and set up a time with the church office to have your own communion service with Pastor Amy presiding at Bethlehem.
- Join us for Zoom Communion at 12 pm on November 29, and December 13
- Call Pastor Amy to come bring you communion to your residence (garage, etc).



#### GIVING MADE EASY!

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

#### 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

office@bethlehemcf.net

##### Heather Hurd-Schneider Director of Fellowship and Outreach

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##### Seth Bullerman-IT Director

bullerms@uni.org

##### Hanna Stolper-Music Director

hstolper@yahoo.com

##### 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

Ellen Hermanson: 319-573-0719

Joan Christiansen: 319-269-5634

#### Giving Update as of November 24:

YTD Income: \$126,269.56

YTD Expenses: \$123,715.44

Thank you for all the ways you support the ministry of Bethlehem!



## Christmas Under the Stars!

**Christmas Eve 7 pm**

Come and join us at a special drive-in event on Christmas Eve! We will gather the faithful to come and hear the gospel story read. Then we will have a candlelight singing of "Silent Night" before heading home and keeping everyone safe.

All are welcome!

## Christmas Eve Online

Join us in the safety of your home at whatever time you wish for your choice of celebration service or contemplative service complete with music & candlelight!



Our Pastor  
**Rev. Amy Eisenmann**  
**(218) 290-3982 cell phone**  
**(319) 266-3541 work phone**  
**[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)**