



Bethlehem Family and Friends,

I came across this poem today that speaks to why I love Advent and Christmas so much. I thought perhaps it would speak to you and remind you why we all should come, drop it all, and hear the story again:

*My heart and I have an agreement.
Every year we show up here—
here in the sanctuary,
here with the candles and the tall ceilings,
here with the creaky church pews and the songs of silent nights.
My heart and I have an agreement.
Every year we show up here—
at the end of the year,
after another 12 months of humanity,
of me trying to keep it all together,
trying to keep my head above water,
trying to keep up appearances.
Every year we show up here.
We drop it all. We leave it at the door.
We come into this space and I could swear it feels different.
Maybe it's God. Maybe it's hope. Maybe it's love.
But whatever it is, I need it every year,
so we show up here.
Tell us again the story of tonight.
My heart needs it.*

Prayer by Rev. Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Whatever your heart needs this Advent season, I pray you might find it here at Bethlehem. Whether it is the simple telling of the story through our children and volunteers in the Live Nativity Dec 4, or it is the quiet peace of Holden Evening Prayer on Wednesday nights, or it is the joy of dancing around the Christmas tree Dec 11, or the hope we can be reminded of at the Quiet Christmas service Dec 18, I truly hope and pray that there is something that your heart needs this Advent and Christmas season that we can offer. Come dear ones, come. May you find it here.

Your partner on the journey,
Pastor Amy

Ways to get involved at Bethlehem in the next few weeks...

Our next Joyful Times meeting will be Thursday, Dec. 8 at BLC at 9:30am. Please come and join us for coffee and fellowship!

On January 19, we will meet at UNI's Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center at 10:00AM for a tour. The tour will include: The Great Hall with new seats, Backstage, Green Room, Third Floor/Catwalks/Lighting system, Orchestra Pit, Basement storage, and Power system. Deadline to sign up is **January 8**. There will be UNI parking tags available so we can park in the metered lot closest to the GBPAC. Lunch will be at Village Inn.



Bethlehem is once again helping families in need by providing them gifts and food. The gifts that are needed are on Christmas stars that will be posted in the Fellowship Hall by November 27. **Please choose a star, buy the gift that the star asks for, and return it to the church. Gifts must be returned to the church by December 11.** Monetary donations are also welcome. If you have any questions, please contact Becky or Theresa.

Bethlehem will be having a **Live Nativity on December 5 from 4:30-6:30 pm**, and we are hoping that you will come check it out! The story will be shared and acted out every 20 minutes. You get a chance to see the characters of the story and live animals too! You can even come and see a live camel! All ages are welcome and encouraged to attend! Come and prepare your hearts for the coming Christ child!



If you are looking for a space that is calm and peaceful... if you are missing loved ones this season and need a place where you can be reminded you will not be apart forever...if you just need a space to breathe and be and listen to God speak...

Come and join us for Quiet Christmas at 4 pm in the sanctuary on December 18.

On December 11, following worship, we will be celebrating Bethlehem's Danish heritage with a Danish brunch and **dancing around the Christmas tree**. If you would like to help with this event, please sign up on the table in the Narthex or talk with Keith Graber.





Greetings!

We have now had our first real snow and the seasons have been changing quickly. We experience the joy and hope of the Advent season as we anticipate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. As joyful as December is, it can also be a hard time for some of us, especially because life's challenges do not stop just because it's the holiday season. For those of you who have difficulty getting out to church during the wintry season, I want you to know that you can always call the church office and request a home communion visit. We are also offering a special **"Quiet Christmas" Service on Sunday, December 18th at 4:00pm** at Bethlehem, along with our friends from St. John's Lutheran Church. If you feel you need a quieter, more reflective space to worship this year, I encourage you to come to this service. If you find your grief is more of a struggle during this season and you would like someone to talk to, I am available to listen. May God's Spirit of joy fill you with peace this and every season.

You can reach me at pastorkristi.grieder@gmail.com, or you can call the church office and leave a message and I will call you back as soon as I can.

God's peace to you along the journey,

Pastor Kristi Grieder

It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year...

Bethlehem is fortunate to have such a wonderful staff. If you would like to give a Christmas gift to our any of staff members, please do. Instead of putting your staff gift in the offering plate, as we have in some years, we encourage you to put the staff member's name on a card with your gift and deliver it to the church office, or put it in their Christmas stockings that are hanging on the wall of the office! **We know words of affirmation and appreciation are a wonderful gift and that our staff treasure hearing what you appreciate about the ministry at Bethlehem.**



Our staff members are Pastor Amy-our lead pastor, Pastor Kristi-our visitation pastor, Hudson-our organist, Deb-our administrative assistant, Patty-our custodian, Brennan-our choir director, and Noah-our worship tech.

If you have any questions, please ask the Exec Team - Ellen Hermanson, Kurt Leistikow, Joan Christiansen, or Connie Johnson. Thank you for remembering our staff this Christmas.

Youth

NEWS AND EVENTS



Congratulations to our Confirmands that were confirmed Sunday, Oct 30:
Charlie Lubs, Rhea Buchanan, and Owyn Reilly



Come and join us as we **dance around the Christmas Tree on Sunday, December 11.** And then come back the next week as we head out and go **Christmas Caroling** to share Christmas joy with our shut-ins during **Education Hour!**

The animals are coming! This year there may be both sheep and donkeys coming to Bethlehem, so be sure to grab your friends and stop by the Live Nativity happening at church on Sunday, Dec 4 4:30-6:30 pm. **A prize will be given for whoever takes the best Live Nativity or Stable Animal Selfie and posts it with the hashtag #christmasatblccf on the Bethlehem Facebook or Instagram pages!**

Coming this Christmas!



Make sure that you **pick up clear ornaments** from Bethlehem sometime between Sunday and Dec 4 so that you can **fill them** with whatever you want, and then **bring them to hang on the Bethlehem Christmas tree in the Fellowship Hall by Sunday, Dec 11!**

Come to church and celebrate Christmas with us! Whether you join us at 3 pm for a kid friendly service, or 7 pm for Traditional Christmas, or 9 pm for Christmas Under the Stars in your pjs, we want all our youth to come to Bethlehem and celebrate Christmas with us!



Living into Advent



The stories, scriptures, and traditions of the Christmas season have been passed down to us throughout the generations. Many of us enter this season with a mix of memories and emotions. Like a tapestry woven throughout time, the Christmas story weaves us in—to remember how God has shown up in the past, to continue the work of collective liberation, to behold the presence of God in flesh and bone.

Our Advent theme this year is also a call to action: what are we being called to generate or bring forth? What have our ancestors and those who have come before us passed on for us to continue? Considering the many ways we embody, remember, and tell the story of Christ's birth, which rituals hold the most meaning for you? What about this season will you pass on to the next generation?

As we live into the theme *From Generation to Generation...* it reminds us of the ways our lives, histories, actions, and stories are interconnected and woven together. The work of God is always unfolding—in and through us. This Advent, may you remember that you belong—to a story etched into the wrinkles of time, to generations that have come before and will come after, to a love that won't let you go. **This Advent season we invite you to join us for two different styles of worship, one on Sunday mornings, and one on Wednesday evenings.**

On Sundays, we will explore the theme: “Generation to Generation” with a blended worship service at 9 am. Each Sunday we will walk through the chronological Christmas story, reminding ourselves of how God has been active in each and every generation.

Nov 27: There's Room for Every Story **Dec 4:** God Meets Us in Our Fear

Dec 11: We Can Choose a Better Way **Dec 18:** We See God in Each Other

On Wednesday evenings we will have Soup Supper from 5:45-6:45 and then gather for Holden Evening Prayer at 7:00 pm. This service will include song, scripture reading, and possibly a brief meditation. We hope you will join us for these services as a way to center your Advent and Christmas seasons!



Thanks to all who contributed to making the Book and Puzzle Sale such a success! **We were able to raise \$425.63 which was divided between the Heritage Remodel and the Youth Trip Fund.** Most of the books were donated to the Hudson Library, the Westerns were donated to the County Jail and taken to the Sheriff's Office. The remaining children's books were donated to the Christmas Family project. Thank you again for making it such a success, and thank you to Nancy Schwaab and Nancy Tibbets for organizing!

Worship

WITH US ONLINE

Not able to join us for worship in person?
No problem! All of our worship services can be
found online on our church website at:

<http://www.bethlehemcf.org/online-worship.html>



Prayer Chain

**To add yourself to the
prayer chain team:**

Email Deb
(officeblccf@gmail.com)

or call Deb at the

church office (319-266-3541) and let her know
that you would like to receive prayer chain
emails.

To add a loved one to the prayer list:

Email Pastor Amy pastoramyblccf@gmail.com
or call Pastor Amy at the church office.



Would you like
communion brought
to you? **Call the
church office, Pastor
Amy or Pastor Kristi
will be glad to come**

and visit! Call the office at 319-266-3541
and we will have communion brought to your
residence. May God bless you and keep you
today and always!



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-Lead Pastor
Pastor Amy's cell phone: 218-290-3982
pastoramyblccf@gmail.com

Pastor Kristi Grieder-Visitation Pastor
pastorkristi.grieder@gmail.com

Deb Estrem—Administrative Assistant
officeblccf@gmail.com

Noah Anderson-Worship Tech
worshiptechbcf@gmail.com

Brennan Regan-Choir Director
bregan99@uni.edu

Hudson Lourenço - Organist
Patty Nelson-Custodian



2022-2023

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ellen Hermanson-President
319-573-0719

Kurt Leistikow -Vice President
319-269-7178

Joan Christiansen- Treasurer
319-269-5634

Connie Johnson-Secretary
319-610-7449

Reed Hunemuller: 319-277-6381

Mindy Fisher 319-290-4365

Mardy Holst 319-277-0328

Theresa Elverum 319-277-3306

Jill Schulte-319-290-5725

YouTube

Live streaming

When you aren't able to join us in person, we hope
you will join us on **Sunday mornings at 9 am** on our
YouTube page at: [https://www.youtube.com/c/
BethlehemLutheranCF](https://www.youtube.com/c/BethlehemLutheranCF)



3 pm-Family Worship-This service will be kid friendly as we hear the story of Christmas woven throughout worship. A service filled with scripture, song, communion, and candlelight. Hudson will be our musician at this service.

7 pm-Contemplative Christmas-This service will be a traditional Christmas service with a sermon, candlelight and communion. A guest musician will lead music at this service.

9 pm-Christmas Under the Stars-Back by popular demand, we will once again gather “drive-in style” for a simple reading of the Christmas gospel, singing of a couple of Christmas songs and for those who wish to, we will gather outside under the stars in the parking lot to sing Silent Night. Feel free to wear your Christmas jammies! :)

Dec 25 at 9 am-Cocoa and Carols -Join us in your Christmas jammies and sweaters for cocoa, cookies, and carols in the Fellowship Hall! All are welcome!

Our Pastor

Rev. Amy Eisenmann
(218) 290-3982 cell phone
(319) 266-3541 work phone
pastoramyblccf@gmail.com

Our website:

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)