



Love one another.

# **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

## **February 2023 Newsletter**

Bethlehem Family and Friends,

As we enter into February, I wonder what this month conjures up for you. Does it bring the idea of love that comes with Valentines day? Is it a hard reminder that the one you love is no longer with us? Does it bring the concept of stillness as we settle into what is hopefully our final full month of winter? Do you search for light on the dark nights? Do you see the hope that comes with dripping icicles? What does February bring to your mind?

Usually for me, February is one of my favorite months, and it seems to go quickly. It frequently brings a brief winter hiatus (as it will this year when I head to Arizona for some continuing ed), it fills me with gratitude and love (as my adoptive family and I celebrate another “gotcha day”, the day I became part of their family), and it brings us one month closer to warmer weather and the hope of Easter.

This year for me, February is a whole mix of emotions. I am looking forward to the heat of Arizona, and celebrating gotcha day on February 14 as always, but on February 22 this year, I will be marking the first year’s passing of my biological father. That date, ironically perhaps, is also Ash Wednesday this year. A day that has always been heavy for many of us, as we “remember that you are dust and to dust you will return”.

As I think back on this last year of our ministry together, it was a year of joy and loss intertwined. We laid to rest 13 friends and family members of this congregation. We celebrated the creation of our PrayGround and beginning construction of our Heritage Remodel project. We made a difference in the lives of many around the Cedar Valley through Love INC, Christmas Families, and exploring new ways to live and serve together.

As we enter into another Lent together, I pray it is a season that give us all the space needed to grieve and heal and the hope of new life that comes with the Easter resurrection. Our theme this Lent is “Healing Waters”...a focus on how God works through the unexpected waters of our lives. I pray this Lenten season offers you a place to come and rest in the promises of God, a chance to dive deeper into God’s love and grace, and a chance to gather together with your church family to worship, to fellowship, and to heal together.

May you always remember, dear ones, even in the midst of whatever struggle you are facing, that it is not death or darkness or fear that get that last word. Love wins in the end. Every time. God loves you beyond measure, and so do we, your church family. Thank you for walking with us.

Your partner on the journey,

*Pastor Amy*





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**Calling all Sunday Schoolers AND Confirmands! Come and join the fun with us on Feb 5.** It is **Bible Camp Sunday**, so we will have some camp songs in worship, super fun camp snacks during coffee time, and then our camp friends, Britt and Emily, will be coming and playing camp games with us! You aren't going to want to miss this! Wear your favorite Bible Camp shirt and bring a friend to come join the fun!



Have you been wondering when you might be able to get your First Communion?

We invite anyone ages 3rd Grade and up to grab your parents and come and join us for the **First Communion Retreat on Sunday, April 2, at 1 pm.** All ages are welcome to join us...we just ask that you sign up on the welcome table with the number attending so that we have enough materials for everyone! Looking forward to learning with you!



**Calling ALL Confirmands!** Have you been wanting some time set aside just for you? For learning and games, food, and fun? Here's your chance! We are gathering for a **confirmation mini-retreat on Sunday, Feb 25, at 3 pm!**

**Grab a friend and come join the fun!** Make sure you let Pastor Amy know if you are coming, and if you are bringing a friend, so that there is enough food and fun for everyone! Just shoot her a text at 218-290-3982 and let her know your plans!

We never cease to be amazed at how talented you are! Whether you play a sport or an instrument, you sing or you dance, you build things or create them, we want to cheer you on! So be sure to let Pastor Amy know dates and times of your concerts, games, and other happenings so that she can be present and support you and let others know how great you are!!



Join us **Feb 12** for a fun project-making day for our shut-ins...as we share the love with others in **Sunday School (for 3 yr olds-6th graders!)**







I am excited to share with you a new small group opportunity as we anticipate the beginning of the Lenten season. As we come to the “Healing Waters” and engage our theme for this Lent, I want to invite you to a special opportunity to go deeper and explore spiritual practices.

The small group will be called, “Deep Dive: Exploring Everyday Spiritual Practices.” This group is for you if you find yourself hearing the Gospel on Sunday morning and wondering how you can integrate it into your life as you go about your week. Or, it’s for you if you are longing for spiritual practices that ground you in your everyday life. This is a great opportunity for you if you are new to the congregation and looking for a place to connect. This is also for you if you have been a member of Bethlehem for a long time, but are looking to deepen relationships with others. Deep Dive is an opportunity to learn something new, connect with others, and practice new ways of being and living out our faith.

Join us on **Mondays in Lent, beginning February 27<sup>th</sup>, from 12:00 noon-1:00pm**. This group will meet for 6 weeks in a hybrid format so that you can join either in person or via ZOOM. You can come in person or you can join us on your lunch break from where you are.

We will focus on a particular spiritual practice each week. Some may be familiar to you as they are steeped in the ancient Christian tradition. Others may be new. There is something for each one of you— to dive deeper into spiritual disciplines this Lenten season.

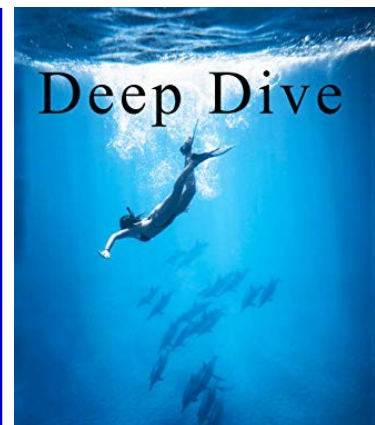
We encourage you to register ahead of time by signing up on our welcome table, calling the church office, or by emailing me directly at [pastorkristi.grieder@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkristi.grieder@gmail.com). But we also want to provide as much flexibility as possible. You may drop in to a particular session that piques your interest or you may come whenever you can. We understand all of us have personal conflicts at work or in our personal lives. Come to the healing waters and take this opportunity to dive deeper and experience God’s abundant love for us.

God’s peace to you along the journey,

Pastor Kristi Grieder

Have you been wanting to deepen your faith this winter and spring? Wondered about spiritual practices that might help you do so? Then this is the group for you!

**Deep Dive: Exploring Everyday Spiritual Practices** will gather on Mondays at noon during Lent (both in person and online) to explore a different spiritual practice each week. For more information, talk to Pastor Kristi today!





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



As we prepare to enter into the Lenten season, we could use more folks helping with worship, as we have two worship services per week (Sundays and Wednesdays) .

If you are willing to help by **ushering, reading,** or by being an **assisting minister**, please let the church office know by calling 319-266-3541. Thanks!



**Come and be a part of our ongoing visioning work with the synod on Sunday, Feb 26.** We will worship together at 9 am (Pastor Kristen Corr Rod will be preaching), and then we will spend time together doing some visioning and conversation before our cottage meetings that begin in March! Come and let your voice be heard!



Coming in March and April we will be having Cottage Meetings to do our best to hear ALL the voices of folks from Bethlehem. We hope to do Cottage Meetings both at church, and outside of our walls, and offer meetings both during the day and during evenings. **If you are interested in being a host for a cottage meeting (meaning you provide the meeting space and maybe a treat and beverage), please contact the church office.**

**All members of Bethlehem are invited to join us for a potluck and celebration of pop-up books on Feb 16 at noon.** Reg Green will be presenting "Pop-Up Books Ain't Just for Kids," we will be able to check out Linda Mixdorf's pop-up book collection and we will make a pop-up card to take home. Come and shake the winter blues with us during this great afternoon of fellowship and fun. All are welcome! To give us an idea of numbers, please sign up on the welcome table! Hope to see you there!



Other fun things coming for the Joyful Times Crew:

- Tuesday, March 21, 2023 - Hartman Reserve Nature Center Tour
- April Event-TBA
- May 25, 2023 , 1:30 pm "War Bonds: The Songs and Letters of World War II" at Hawkeye Community College



# 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>

Or, if you want to join us live from your home, check out our YouTube page Sundays at 9:00 am at:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/BethlehemLutheranCF>

## Final Financial Information for 2022:

### Total Unified Income:

\$278,640.74

### Total Unified Expenses:

\$307,898.26

### Total In/Out for 2022:

\$ -29,257.52



## COMMUNION AT HOME

Would you like communion brought to you?  
**Call the church office and set up**

**a time. 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](mailto:pastoramyblccf@gmail.com)

**Pastor Kristi Grieder-Visitation Pastor**  
Pastor Kristi's cell phone: 507-995-1535  
[pastorkristi.grieder@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkristi.grieder@gmail.com)

**Noah Anderson-Worship Tech**  
[worshiptechbcf@gmail.com](mailto:worshiptechbcf@gmail.com)

**Brennan Regan-Choir Director**  
[bregan99@uni.edu](mailto: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**

## Ash Wednesday

Worship at 7 pm,  
Feb 22

Ashes will also be available in bags to pick up the week prior for those choosing online worship.





# HEALING WATERS

Come and experience the healing waters this Lenten season at Bethlehem in Cedar Falls. On **Sundays at 9 am** come and hear what we can learn from the water in the story of the day. On **Wednesdays at 7 pm**, come hear from those who lived it.

Sunday Feb 26-Sweat

**Weds March 1-Jesus & Satan**

Sunday March 5-Baptism

**Weds March 8-Nicodemus**

Sunday March 12-Thirst

**Weds March 15-Woman at the Well**

Sunday March 19-Spit

**Weds March 22-Blind Man**

Sunday March 26-Tears

**Weds March 29-Ezekiel**

## Want a Deeper Dive?

Join us on **Mondays at noon** as we take a deeper dive into how we can live into the texts of the week through different spiritual practices.

Bethlehem is located at 4000 Hudson Road

Need more info? Check out:

[www.bethlehemcf.org](http://www.bethlehemcf.org)







Join us on Wednesdays during Lent for supper and worship!

We will gather Ash Weds (Feb 22) for worship at 7 pm  
(no supper Ash Weds evening)

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 we will gather for supper at 5:45 pm,  
and worship at 7:00 pm.

We hope you will join us for this time of fellowship  
and worship! All are welcome!

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)