



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

December 2021 Newsletter

Bethlehem Family and Friends,

A friend of mine asked me recently, “how is it with your soul”? It caused me to stop and ponder a while. How is it with your soul as we enter the holiday season? Are you excited? Depressed? Busy? Lonely? How is it with your soul as we have barely entered into Advent, while stores are already talking about post-Christmas sales? “It’s Advent” the church proclaims.

Advent is a season of waiting, of preparation. And yet, all around us, Christmas has been in full swing since October (or earlier!). “It’s Advent” the church sings, as we rush from one commitment to another, too busy to listen, too busy to stop, so tired at the end of the day that we crash into our beds. So busy, however, that we are up in the night, worrying about whether or not we can get it all done.

“It’s Advent” the church whispers...as visions of prophets and hope and a coming savior are told in worship and small groups. “It’s Advent” the church displays as the Advent wreath is present and another candle is lit...one week closer to Jesus’ birth.

How is it with your soul this Advent? What do you need to be fed? I am willing to bet you don’t need one more party or one more present to buy. I am willing to bet you don’t need one more thing on your calendar, or one more thing on your “to do” list.

What do you need this Advent season? Maybe you need to stop, to breathe for just an hour in the midst of the hustle and the bustle. If so, I invite you to take a break on Sunday mornings at 9 am, or Wednesday nights at 6:45 pm and join us for worship. Just come and be as you are, loved and forgiven.

Maybe you need some time with your family. You want time to be together on these long, dark nights... but you aren’t sure of what to do, or how to start the conversation. I invite you to pick up the Advent devotionals that Bethlehem has for you that begin this Sunday. See them, not as one more thing that you have to do, but a chance to slow down in the midst of the busy season and spend some quality time together, if that is something your family is needing during this Advent season.

Maybe you are sad and you are looking for hope this Advent, or you just need a quieter space to gather. If so, then I invite you to come to our Quiet Christmas Worship on December 19 at 4 pm. Come and be reminded of the hope of the Christ child. Come and listen for what God is speaking to you in the midst of this busy world.

Whatever your soul needs this month, I invite you to come and be fed this Advent. Not with cookies and treats (although we have those, too!), but come and be fed with hope and joy and companionship and family time and the love that God has for you. May the God of Hope come and speak to each of you this Advent!

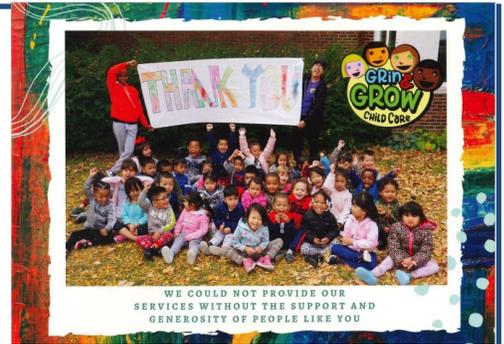
Your partner on the journey, *Pastor Amy*

You've
Got Mail



Bethlehem Luth. Church Knitters,
Thank you so much for the donation of hand-made scarves to the children and families we serve. As a non-profit child care, our families depend on COMMUNITY support. All of our families, children, and staff thank you!

Ed Johnson
Director of Operations



October 04, 2021

Hello and God Bless Your Church!

I am writing to thank you so very much for helping me to acquire a piece of equipment that will help me this month.

Last year I had my left hip replaced & then March 2021, I had my 7th back surgery. Now I am going to get my right hip replaced on Oct. 18th.

I picked up my toilet riser today so am busy getting ready for my next surgery.

Thank you SO much!

Sincerely, MaryKangas

To The Knitters @ Bethlehem Lutheran,
Thank you all so much for the time you have spent on knitting winter items for our students @ Highland- I know they will appreciate all of the items as the weather is changing to colder temps. We will be putting some of the items in our Adopt-A-family Christmas bags for families we know will need them too- Again Thank you all & have a wonderful fall/winter. Stay warm & safe- love- Your Highland Family & Ms. Patty



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

Bethlehem is fortunate to have such a wonderful staff. This year, to make staff gifts even more meaningful, we are going to try something new. If you would like to give a Christmas gift to our amazing staff, please do. Instead of putting your staff gift in the offering plate, put the staff member's name on a card with your gift and deliver it to the church office, or put it in one of their Christmas Stockings! 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, Hudson-our organist, Cayla-our office manager, Heather-our director of fellowship and outreach, Patty-our custodian, Leah-our choir director, and Noah-our worship tech person. If you have any questions, please ask the Exec Team - Mardy Holst, Joan Christianson, Theresa Elverum, or Jill Schulte. Thank you in advance for remembering our giving staff members.

Thanks to all who participated in Trunk or Treat!

It was a huge success with 181 cars...more than triple last year!



This Advent season we invite you to join us for two different themes of worship, one on Sunday mornings, and one on Wednesday evenings.

On Sundays, we will be doing the series: “What Are You Waiting For?”

Waiting is one of those spiritual disciplines that we as Christians exercise as we await Christ’s second coming, but also we wait for answers to our prayers and wait as we show patience toward individuals or circumstances that we wish would change but haven’t yet. As the world rushes towards Christmas and demands instant gratification, the church pauses to experience the waiting of Advent.



Nov 28: Active Waiting

Dec 5: Waiting for Light

Dec 12: Waiting for Strength

Dec 19: Waiting to Be Satisfied

On Wednesday evenings at 6:45 pm we will be doing the series: “The Angels Speak”. The



holiday season can stir deep emotions within each of us. Thankfully, our God meets us wherever we are, both physically and emotionally. This series gives voice to the complex emotions with which we greet the coming Messiah and reminds us of the reactions of those who first received the news of Jesus’ birth.

Dec 1: The Angel Speaks to Zechariah’s Fear

Dec 8: The Angel Speaks to Joseph’s Confusion

Dec 15: The Angel Speaks to Mary’s Doubt

Dec 22: The Angel Speaks to the Shepherd’s Curiosity



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 19.

On December 12, 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 contact Heather at heather@bethlehemcf.net



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

Joyful Times: Experience Advent through Stained Glass & Music

Joyful Times will meet at Trinity Lutheran Church, 605 W. 4th St. in Waterloo on Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2021, to learn the history behind "Church Row", marvel at the beauty of their stained glass windows and enjoy a short Advent/Christmas organ recital.

- Meet at Trinity Lutheran Church at 9:45AM. Mary Potter will start the tour at 10:00AM. Sue Sauer is the organist at Trinity Lutheran.
- Lunch at Perkins, 4045 Hammond Ave, Waterloo, @ 11:45AM



Bethlehem will be having a **Live Nativity on December 5 from 4:30-6pm**, 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!

Men's Prayer Breakfast: Come and join us as we gather on **December 4** to share perspectives on love, families, and faith traditions as we live into the waiting of the Advent season. What are you waiting for? Where have you seen God at work in this waiting time? What are signs you have seen of the coming of Christ? **All men are welcome to join us at 8:00 am, December 4.**



Bethlehem will be helping families in need have a nice Christmas by providing them some gifts and food. The gifts that are needed are on Christmas stars that have been posted in the Fellowship Hall. **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 12.** Monetary donations are also welcome. If you have any questions, please contact Heather.

Remember if the Cedar Falls schools are canceled or dismissed early, due to bad weather, the church office is closed and all activities at the church are canceled.



Youth NEWS AND EVENTS



Congratulations to this year's students who were confirmed on Sunday, October 31: Emma Halvorsen, Kaleb Larson, and Sam Smith

On December 12, join us for brunch, making Danish heart ornaments, and **dancing around the Christmas tree**. We are looking for a few junior high, high school students, or adults to help with this event. **If you can help, let Pastor Amy know!**



Join us after church on Dec 19 for trivia for all ages:

"Myth Busters:
The Christmas Story Edition"



The animals are coming!

Be sure to grab your friends and stop by the Live Nativity happening at church on Sunday, Dec 5 4:30-6:00 pm.

Prize will be given for whoever takes the best Live Nativity or Stable Animal Selfie and posts it with the hashtag #christmasatblccf



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, we want all our youth to come to

Bethlehem and celebrate Christmas with us!

Did you forget to register for the Youth Gathering?

Bummer! But guess what? If you sign up by Sun., January 9, you can still come for only \$40 more! Need more info? Want to sign up? Talk to Pastor Amy today! **Our next**

Youth Gathering Meeting will be Sunday, January 23!



Tired of cold weather? **All ages are invited to our annual pool party on Saturday, January 8, at 11am-12:30pm** at the Cedar Valley SportsPlex. We will be getting pizza for lunch. Each family is asked to pay \$5.00. There is a sign-up sheet on the Welcome Table. If you have any questions, please contact Heather.

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>



To add yourself to the prayer chain team:

Email Cayla
(office@bethlehemcf.net)

or call Cayla 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 pastoramy@bethlehemcf.net
or call Pastor Amy at the church office.



Are you still not comfortable coming to worship in person? Are you unable to join us, but still wishing you could have communion?

Call the church office and Pastor Amy will be glad to bring communion to you! Call the office at 319-266-3541 and we will have communion brought to your residence. May God bless you and keep you in these days apart.



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
pastoramy@bethlehemcf.net

Cayla Morris- Office Manager
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Heather Hurd-Schneider
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Noah Anderson-Worship Tech
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Leah Gibbons-Choir Director
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Hudson Lourenço - Organist

Patty Nelson-Custodian



2021-2022

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mardy Holst-President
319-277-0328

Theresa Elverum-Vice President
319-277-3306

Jill Schulte- Treasurer
319-290-5725

Joan Christiansen- Secretary
319-269-5634

Reed Hunemuller: 319-277-6381

Brendan Alexander: 319-290-1237

Ellen Hermanson: 319-573-0719

Kurt Leistikow 319-269-7178

Mindy Fisher 319-290-4365

YouTube

Live streaming

Did you know you can now worship with us live??
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>



Christmas Eve Worship Options



3 pm-Family Worship-This service will be kid friendly as we tell the story of Christmas through the characters of the Christmas story. 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. Guest musician Joelle Smith (Pastor Dan's daughter) 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 gathering outside under the stars in the parking lot to sing Silent Night.

Our Pastor
Rev. Amy Eisenmann
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pastoramy@bethlehemcf.net

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)