



Love one another.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

February 2022 Newsletter

Bethlehem Family and Friends,

As we begin another year of ministry together, we do looking back on the roller coaster of being both together and apart due to covid, remembering those who are no longer a part of our church family, and welcoming new and returning members to our congregation.

As we embark on a new year together, we also embrace a new theme for the year. Last year, our year was “All About Love”. It was a chance to love our church family, our neighbors, our traditions, our new experiments, and to experience some new ways of doing things. This year, our yearly theme comes from the acronym B.L.E.S.S. As I introduced at our Annual Meeting, these letters stand for:

B-Begin with prayer, L-Listen with care, E-Eat together, S-Serve in love, S-Share your story

Bethlehem already does a great job of eating together (we love fellowship), and serving (Backpacks, Christmas Families, Food Bank, Community Meals, Love INC, etc). This year we want to continue to do those things well while also adding in an opportunity to deepen our spiritual practices of prayer, listening, and story sharing. The acronym BLESS comes from the book: “B.L.E.S.S.-Five Everyday Ways to Love Your Neighbor and Change the World,” by Dave and Jon Ferguson. We will have an opportunity throughout the year to unpack what each of these letters mean, as well as to read the book in full for those who are interested. In the meantime, included in this newsletter is a page of the “proposed plans” for how we will live into this theme this year. I invite you to print it, hang it on your fridge, and remind yourself of our focus as we walk through the year together. Hopefully you were able to get a refrigerator magnet for your home with this theme on it. If you haven’t, we invite you to swing by the welcome table and pick one up for your family.

Throughout this newsletter are ways to start living into our theme: prayer prompts to add to your prayers this month, an opportunity to listen to Margaret Cundy give us a quote to live by, a fun recipe to make and share with those with whom you wish you could be eating, some upcoming chances to serve others, and an introduction into one of our families at Bethlehem that you might not have had a chance to meet yet!

However you choose to spend this month, we hope you know that you are a blessing to our church family. Stay healthy and stay safe, friends! Hope to see you soon!

Your partner on the journey,

Pastor Amy

Youth NEWS AND EVENTS

Family Fun Day for youth of all ages on Feb 27! Come and join us on Feb 27 after worship either for our **2nd Annual Snow Day** or a **Family Movie Day** (depending on weather!). At either rate, grab your family, grab your friends, and come join the fun! The final decision about this day will be announced on our Bethlehem Facebook page, so **make sure you have liked us on Facebook** or come to church the week before to learn more!



Hey Confirmands! Note the change of date!!
We will be gathering on February 20 for Confirmation this month! Come and learn more about the 2 Lutheran sacraments. Do you know what they are?



Do you like to draw? Or paint? Or color? Pastor Amy would love it if you would share your art with us! Just bring it in to share, making sure your name and age are on it (this is open to ALL ages). Once we have a few pieces of art to display, we will display them in what we hope can be a rotating art exhibit. Themes for this month's art: Love, Family, Creation


**I CAN
AND I WILL
WATCH ME**

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!!

B-Begin with Prayer

Things you might consider praying for this month:

- *For those who are feeling unloved or alone during Valentine's Day
- *For those facing discrimination because of race, gender, or age
- *For the NEIA Synod Staff and Bishop Kevin Jones
- *For those who are without heat or housing
- *For medical professionals: doctors, nurses, etc
- *For those traveling for the winter



A simple mealtime pray for February:

Lord, thank You for the food before us, the family and friends beside us and the love between us. Amen.

While Cedar Falls Community Meals is still unable to gather, Bethlehem made the decision to financially contribute to the community meal program at Queen of Peace by donating \$500. In 2021 Queen of Peace served 8376 meals. They had 188 this past Tuesday and a high of 214 last month. Thank you to those who helped to make this decision, for seeing the need and helping all to be fed in the Cedar Valley.



L-Listen
to others

Vegan Italian Bean & Lentil Soup

...to place in a jar and share with a neighbor or friend:

E-Eat Together



For Mix:

- 2 Tablespoons [Litehouse Italian Herb Blend](#)

OR

SPICE BLEND SUBSTITUTE: 1 Tbsp: dried onion flakes; **1 tsp each:** basil, oregano, garlic powder; **1/2 tsp each:** red pepper, marjoram, rosemary, sage

- 1/3 cup dry red lentils
- 1/3 cup dry split peas
- 1/3 cup dry white beans
- 1 vegetable bouillon cube



Layer all these ingredients in a 13 to 16-ounce glass jar. Include the following directions for preparing the soup, then share it with someone you wish you could eat with during this Covid time apart or with someone who might be wishing they had others to eat with as a reminder that they are not alone.

To prepare Vegan Italian Bean & Lentil Soup: Remove wrapper on vegetable bouillon cube and add it, along with remaining contents of jar, to soup pot. Pour in 6 cups of water and 14-ounce can of petite diced tomatoes (with juice) and bring to boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 90 minutes, or until beans are tender and soup is thickened. Add more water, if necessary, to achieve desired consistency. Serves 4.



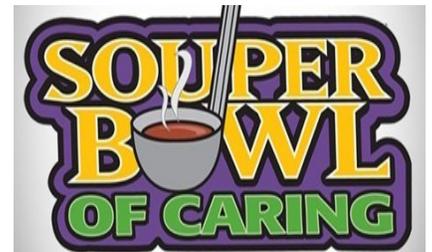
Ways to get involved at Bethlehem in the next few weeks...

S-Serve in love



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 266-3541. Thanks!

We will be collecting donations from Jan 30-Feb 13 for the Souper Bowl of Caring. Donations will be given to the Northeast Iowa Food bank to help provide food for individuals in the Cedar Valley. This year there will be a competition between males and females to see who can donate the most since not many of us are super engaged with the teams remaining in the playoffs!



On February 6, after worship, we will be making a Valentine gift for nursing home members. We were hoping to go play BINGO at NewAldaya with the residents, but the number of COVID cases have stopped activities from occurring in building. We invite all ages to help us assemble the gifts so that all of our nursing home residents will know that we are thinking of and praying for them during this season apart.

Did you know all members and friends of Bethlehem are welcome to attend All Team Meetings? This is the place to come and hear about upcoming events at BLC and how you might get involved in them. Want to hear more? Have questions about how All Team works? Call the church office at 319-266-3541. We'd love to connect you with those whose team you would like to be a part of!



We are considering offering another YogaDevotion class both online and in person...meaning you can participate by coming to church or from your very own living room! If you are interested in being a part of this offering, please let Cayla know in the church office.

- B** Begin with prayer
- L** Listen with care
- E** Eat together
- S** Serve in love
- S** Share your story

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
 heather@bethlehemcf.net

Noah Anderson-Worship Tech
worshiptechbcf@gmail.com

Leah Gibbons-Choir Director
gibbonsl@uni.edu

Hudson Lourenco - Organist

Patty Nelson-Custodian

Final Financial Information for 2021:

Total Unified Income:
\$314,049.41

Total Unified Expenses:
\$314,166.93

Total In/Out for 2021: \$-117.52



Remember, if the Cedar Falls schools are canceled or dismissed early, due to bad weather, the church office is also closed and all activities at the church are canceled. You can also check out the church Facebook page for up-to-date announcements.



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GIVING MADE EASY!

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

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 Christensen- 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



Ash Wednesday

Worship at 7 pm,
 March 2

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

February All Team Meeting Project Night!

Tuesday, February 8

7:00 pm in the Sanctuary or on Zoom

As we begin looking at spring activities, and dreaming of warmer weather, **we invite you to come and join the All Team Meeting!** If you are interested in any of the following this month, come and join us:



EDUCATION-This group will meet to continue conversation about educational happenings at Bethlehem. From Bible Studies to discussion groups, from children to adults, what do we want to have happen for the remainder of spring? Do we want to do VBS? What educational topics would we like to see covered for our adults? If you have a desire to help make our educational program stronger at Bethlehem, then **EDUCATION** is the breakout for you!

CONGREGATIONAL HOME-This group meets to tackle any upkeep and repair projects around the building that need doing, ensuring that everything is in working order. If you like to work with your hands, or have maintenance know how and can lend a hand, then **CONGREGATIONAL HOME** is the breakout for you!

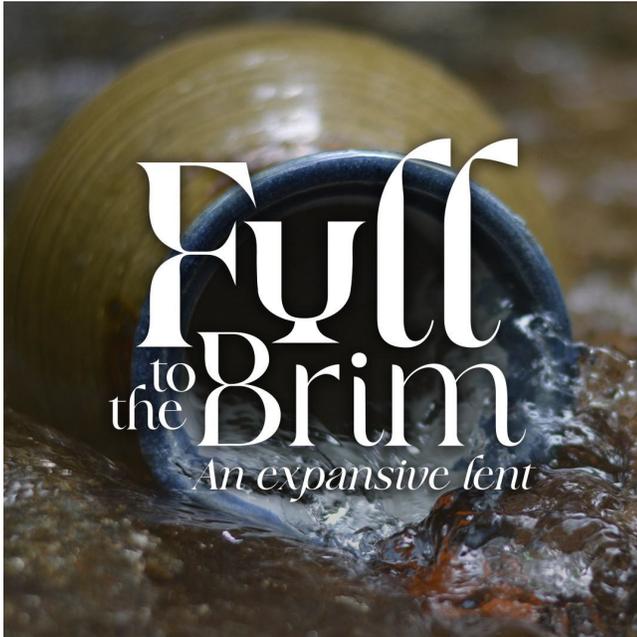
SPRING FELLOWSHIP/OUTREACH-This group will be working on upcoming fellowship/outreach opportunities, such as: Nursing Home Art Projects, Family Fun Day, and more. This also would be the place to meet with Heather and talk about any other fellowship you would like to see this spring. Have an idea for a small group? Want a chance to gather in the building for something else? Have an idea about doing new outreach to our neighborhood or the UNI community? Then **SPRING FELLOWSHIP/OUTREACH** breakout is for you!

Still confused about how all of this All Team stuff works? Never been a part of a breakout before? No problem! Come and join us on Feb 8th at 7 pm in the sanctuary and we will figure it out together! Questions or concerns, please email Pastor Amy at pastoramy@bethlehemcf.net

All Team is a great way to get connected in ways to serve others! If you want to learn more about how you can get connected at Bethlehem, please contact the church office at 319-266-3541.



S-Serve in love



This Lenten season we will be exploring the theme “Full to the Brim”, both on Sundays and Wednesdays. **On Sundays we will take scripture readings and discover together how, even in the midst of Lent, we can be reminded of God’s promises and action among us. Wednesday nights we will hear stories of those who have experienced each of our weekly themes.**

As you look at the themes below, we invite you to consider sharing your story on a Wednesday evening.

Some questions to think about: “How has God worked in your life to fill you up when you were feeling empty?” “Where in your life has God shown up and blessed you abundantly?” “How have you found ways to live into the abundance of God’s blessing?” “What story have you experienced that might touch others and help them to see God at work in their own lives?” We are reminded through our yearly theme at Bethlehem that all of us are called to share our stories. Is God calling you to be brave and courageous and share your story this Lenten season? Are you willing to stand up and speak or stand up and have a conversation in front of the Wednesday night worship community?

If you are feeling called to share your story, please talk to Pastor Amy! She would love to help you think through how your story can make a difference in our community. Thanks for prayerfully considering if YOU are being called to share your story this Lent. Our weekly themes are:

Ash Wednesday: Full to the Brim: With All That You Are

Week 1: Full to the Brim: Even in the Desert

Week 2: Full to the Brim: Under God’s Wing

Week 3: Full to the Brim: You Are Worthy

Week 4: Full to the Brim: Prodigal Grace

Week 5: Full to the Brim: Brazen Acts of Beauty

More information about our Lenten practices will be available on the church website and in the March newsletter! Stay tuned for more info coming soon!

S-Serve in love



Giving Guide

Bethlehem is a place of radical generosity! When we “Share the Bread of Life with the hungry world”, lives are transformed by grace. Together as a church our gifts are multiplied and God rejoices over the hearts of cheerful givers. May you know abundant joy in living a generous life!

Cash and personal checks are welcome to be either placed in envelopes at worship, or mailed to the church office. If you would like to receive envelopes at your home, please notify the church office. If you no longer wish to receive envelopes due to your online giving, please notify the church office of that as well. We encourage the use of envelopes as it lets you clearly designate your giving. If you prefer to mail in your gift, please include a note about how you wish your gift designated.

Another option for giving is using your own financial institution and setting up **Online Banking with your bank**. Through doing so, just like paying bills, you are able to set up how frequently you would like to give, etc. Using your online financial institution typically means there is no cost to Bethlehem for this service.

Give on our website – it’s easy to set up your giving through our website at <http://www.bethlehemcf.org/giving-at-bethlehem.html> Just click on “Donate Online”, fill in your basic information, and click on where you want your giving to go. This does cost a small processing fee to Bethlehem. We are working on the request some of you have made so that you can pay the processing fee. We will let you know when this option is available.

Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) through your annuities if you are over the age of 72. Talk with your investment representative for details. An easy way to give!



Giving Made easy! Scan the QR code with your smart phone to share your offering with Bethlehem.

We appreciate your faithfulness in giving, or your prayers, time, and finances, whether you are physically present with us, travelling, or worshipping online. Thank you for all the ways you continue to support the ministry at Bethlehem Lutheran Church!

Do you still have questions? Contact the church office, your accountant or your financial advisor.

But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

2 Corinthians 8:7

BLESS -A Year of Learning and Listening-Bethlehem 2022

A proposed plan for deepening our relationships with God,
our community, and one another

Begin with Prayer

Blessing of the Prayer Shawls

Aug 21-Blessing of the Backpacks

Prayer Milestone (TBD)

Prayer Practices during Holy Week (possibly also in Lent)

Prayer Prompts (in newsletter, for meetings, etc)

Possible Prayer Page (on website)

Listen with Care

March 27-Paint Your Heart Out Event

April 30-May 1 Women's Retreat

August 27-Bounceback to Bethlehem

Care and Connect Team All Member Reach Out (hopefully by Easter)

Pastoral Prayer Cards

Pastoral Listening Posts (coming this summer/fall)

Listening Team for Community Leaders and Community Members

Eat Together

Feb 20-Soup2Go

April 24-Ableskiver

Nov 6-UNI Treats and Eats

Nov 12-Men of Faith Dinner

Mealtime Conversation Ideas and Prayer Prompts for Families/Households

Serve in Love

Feb 6-Valentine's Gifts for Shut-Ins

March-Pack the Pack N Play for Alternatives Pregnancy Center

May 15-Camp Bethlehem Community Service Day

June-Canned Goods 4 Can of Worms

July-Helping Hands Help with Hygiene (H4)

August-Backpacks and School Supplies for North Cedar

Sept 11-God's Work Our Hands Volunteer Fair

Sept 25-Camp Bethlehem Service Day

Share Your Story

Lenten Season-Faith Stories

April 16-Easter Egg Extravaganza

June 5-Fish Story Event (includes fishing and Cookout)

Member Monday (on social media and Website?)

Dec 11-Danish Brunch and Dance Around the Tree

Wisdom Ways (interviews of older members to hear stories and record memories)



Soup2Go

Sunday, Feb 20
following worship

Pre-orders due by
Feb 13. Proceeds
go to the youth
going to the Youth
Gathering. Thanks
for your support!



You can order pre-order as many servings of Cream of Chicken and Wild Rice Soup or Chili to go as you would like. Order forms are available at the church or on the church website. On Sunday Feb 20 you can take hot soup with you after worship, or pick up via drive-thru at Bethlehem! Thanks for supporting BLC Youth!

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