

December 2017

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH



# Bethel Messenger

*Vibrantly open to the spirit, Bethel Lutheran Church serves God and its neighbors by joyfully living and sharing the Good News!*

## Pastor's message

"Could the world be about to turn?" - Rory Cooney "Canticle of the Turning"

This first time I remember singing the hymn "Canticle of the Turning" was in college. I'm sure I had encountered it before, but it was in a mass choir rehearsal for Christmas Fest when these lyrics hit me like a ton of bricks. This hymn using the familiar tune of "Star of the County Down," was anything but subtle in its proclamation of a world moving God, who throws everything on its head in order to bring about justice, strength, and truth.

Of course Rory Cooney wasn't the first person to write this kind of proclamation as the text of this song is based directly on the Magnificat. "The Magnificat" is the Latin name for the song sung by Mary in the first chapter of Luke after hearing that through her a Savior was to be born. In this joyous song Mary sings of a God who shows favor to the lowly, brings down the powerful from their thrones, feeds the hungry, and sends the rich away empty. Every line is a magnificent proclamation of faith in God's promised redemption, salvation, and mercy.

Martin Luther had his own crack at a Christmas hymn in the song "From Heaven Above" where he writes in his 14th stanza, "'Glory to God in highest heav'n, who unto us the Son has given.' With angels sing in pious mirth a glad new year to all the earth!" While his song is a little long-winded compared to Mary's Magnificat, they both highlight the new and glorious work of God in the world.

In the season of Advent, we hear these promises anew. As we work our way towards Christmas our Scripture readings on Sunday morning revisit stories of anticipation; from the prophet's cries, to Christ's teachings concerning the future. In hearing these texts we are invited to prepare our own hearts and minds for the changes which God will bring in our own lives and in the world today. We prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth, by *actively* waiting; looking out, leaning forward, pacing the floor, because this is truly good news that brings about real lasting positive change. But as the songs remind us, this isn't an artificial change, like a spell of happiness or a change in decorations or decorum, no the newness of God is far more radical. The justice, mercy, and grace we pray for can flip the world on its head, helping those who are suffering and lifting up those who are lowly. The world needs that hope and members of our Bethel community need that hope. So in this Advent season, let us pray all the more fervently for God's intervention in the lives of those in need. As we are watching, may we look for those opportunities where God is calling us to accompany another and help each other on the way. And as always, in this month of waiting, anticipation, and celebration, let's keep our eyes, ears, and hearts, open to the new things which God can bring. Just remember, it may just turn your world upside down!

Rev. Aaron Holmgren

## Bethel's contribution to MEFS

Our congregation collected **673 pounds of food** for the **McLeod Emergency Food Shelf**, which included \$250 worth of food purchased with our Thrivent Action Team grant.

## Christmas Shoeboxes given to Marie Sandvik Center

Our congregation put together **29 Christmas Shoeboxes** for the **Marie Sandvik Center** in Minneapolis. Our Thrivent Action Team grant paid for 20 plastic shoeboxes and several board games, Playdoh, basketballs, and a football that will be used for the Christmas party at the Center.

## The Secret Pal Reveal

The **Secret Pal Reveal** will be held **Saturday, December 2 at 10:00 am** at the church. We will exchange gifts (valued at \$15) and reveal our identities to each other. Then we will continue our time together by traveling to Hutchinson where we will attend the **Christmas Trees and Traditions** event at Christ the King Lutheran Church. Lunch will be available there from 11:00 am-1:30 pm, plus, there will be displays of decorated trees, holiday tables, and holiday collections, music, quilts, a country store, bake shop, and silent auction. Something for everyone! Hope you will be able to join us!

## Women of the ELCA meeting

The **Women of the ELCA** will meet on **Tuesday, December 5** at 6:30 pm at the church. Please consider joining this group if you would like to help with planning future **ministry projects, learning activities, and fellowship opportunities** for the women at Bethel. New ideas and new members are always welcome!

## McLeod County Giving Tree project

We are in the process of collecting gifts for children in McLeod County, whose families do not have adequate means to provide for them. Gift tags listing a child's age, gender, and gift request are available on a small tree located in the narthex. Please, take one or more tags, shop for and purchase the gifts, then return them with their tag, to the church by **Sunday, December 10. Our W/ELCA unit is taking care of 10 of the gift requests and we challenge the rest of the congregation to triple that effort and take care of at least 30 more!** Let's make Christmas a little merrier for children in our area.

## Thrivent presentations

- On **Wednesday, December 13** at 8:30 am at the McLeod County Historical Society (380 School Rd. NW, Hutchinson) Thrivent will be sponsoring **"Keeping the Family Farm in the Family."** (see updated flyer on the bulletin board), the guest speaker will be Shari P. Fisher, attorney, Fischer Law PA. Shari Fischer grew up on a farm. Her husband and his brothers continue to work a third-generation farm near Hanska. Shari knows what your family farm means to you and your family. Join her for a down-to-earth discussion on how to keep your farm in your family. Please **RSVP to Jean Hallberg at 320-587-6440 or jean.hallberg@thrivent.com by Dec. 11, 2017** to reserve your spot. Breakfast will be served.
- On **Saturday, January 6** beginning at 10:00 am, our W/ELCA unit will be sponsoring a Thrivent presentation entitled **"Financial Strategies for Women."** Our own Jean Hallberg will be the presenter. A delicious brunch will be provided as well as child care. Women of all ages from our congregation and from the community are invited to attend and be a part of this special morning. Watch for more details coming soon.

## Christmas movie family outing

The Education board has planned a fun family outing to see the movie **The Star**, an animated movie about the Christmas story through the eyes of the donkey. We plan to see the 3:20 pm matinee, at the Hutchinson CineMagic Century 9 Theatre, on **Saturday, December 2**. If you are interested in attending please email bethellp.edu@gmail.com. We hope you can join us!

## December Book Club gathering

On **Sunday, December 17** at 5:00 pm the Book club will meet at Nancy Krull's house to watch **The Shack** and to finalize the 2018 book selections. Please, bring book ideas and a potluck dish to share. The book selected for January is **Turquoise Table** by Kristin Schell. We will meet for the January book discussion at Bethel on Wed., **January 17** at 7:15 pm. All are welcome to join us on Movie Night and for Book Club discussions!

## Sunday School news

Sunday school has been on a roll! We have been seeing some new faces and attendance is up! We hope to keep the momentum going!

- We are still looking for **volunteers** to help out during our Sunday school hour. Let us know you can help by signing up for any Sunday during the month. The "white board" sign-up sheet is hanging in the narthex.
- Our lesson for **Sunday, December 3** is from **Daniel 6:6-23**. We encourage you and your child(ren) to read the Bible story beforehand and talk about it after the lesson.
- **Christmas program practice** will be on **Sunday, December 10** (Possibly another time also, so stay tuned!)
- On **Sunday, December 17** the Sunday school children will present "**The Birth of Jesus**" during our worship service beginning at 9:00 am. Our **Christmas party** will be during the Sunday school hour following worship!

## Poinsettia orders

It's time to about **decorating our sanctuary for Christmas!** There is an order sheet on the bulletin board for anyone that wants to purchase a poinsettia (s) to be displayed in our sanctuary. When signing up you may indicate if you would like to purchase "in celebration", "in honor", or "in memory" of a loved one(s). The cost is \$5.00 for a 4" pot and \$10.00 for a 6" pot. Checks should be written out to Bethel Lutheran Church and payment given to Judy Angvall. **Orders should be placed by Sunday, December 10.**

## Christmas Treat bags

We are accepting **cash donations** for Treat bags to be given out to the children on the day of the Sunday school Christmas program, Sunday, December 17, 2017. Please, give your donation to Diane Horsman. **Thank you in advance for your generosity!**

## Christmas caroling

The choir will gather to **sing Christmas carols on Sunday, December 17**. We plan to meet at Cedar Crest, in Silver Lake, at 11:15 am. All are welcome to join us for some old fashioned caroling to brighten the Advent season for these residents. Questions? contact Lisa Klobe.

## Endowment Fund grants

**Endowment funds are available** for a wide variety of grant requests. Application forms are located on the narthex table for anyone interested in applying for a grant. During our Adult Forum on **Sunday, December 10** members will have an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about this new process at Bethel. The Endowment Committee members are: Dick Kiekhaefer, Nancy Krull, Sally Krull, Tim Smith, LuAnn Weisenburger. Completed applications can be put in the Endowment Committee mailbox. The deadline for applications is **December 31, 2017**.

## ELCA Good Gifts

ELCA Good Gifts are a fantastic way to honor friends and loved ones with a unique, meaningful Christmas gift that will make a difference in the world. *How it works...*

- 1) *Browse the catalog and choose the gifts that mean the most to you or your friends and family. There are three ways to give: **Online:** [ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://ELCA.org/goodgifts); **Phone:** 800-638-3522; **Mail:** Send the enclosed order form (*in the catalogs*) to: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America-PO Box-1809-Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.*
- 2) *Get a card:* If your gift is in honor of a friend or loved one, it's easy to tell them about it.
- 3) *Where your money goes:* Your donation will be used where it is needed most within the wider category of each gift you've selected. For example, a gift of vaccinations may be used to support other health care initiatives. This allows our church to stay adaptive, flexible and effective in the work that we do.

To learn more check out the ELCA Good Gifts catalogs on the narthex table or go to [ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://ELCA.org/goodgifts). As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, God's greatest gift to the world, we have a great opportunity to share that love with others.

## Community Holiday Celebration on December 3

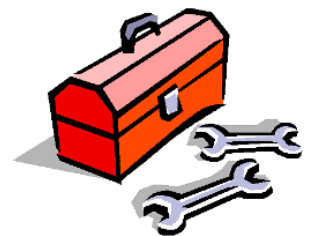
**Community breakfast** from 9:00 am-noon, serving pancakes, eggs, sausage, toast, juice, and coffee; free will donation. The proceeds from this event help support community projects. See the flyer on the bulletin board for more information! From 10:00 am-noon **Santa Claus, his reindeer and sleigh** will be in town! **Music** provided by LPHS Music students.

## Bethel's Tool box

**We have a tool box in the elevator room and we would like to add these tools to the tool box:**

- 20' tape measure
- Needle nose plier
- Assortment of screw drivers
- Allen wrenches
- Vice grip
- Medium to large wire cutter
- Duct tape
- Flashlight

If someone would like to donate any of these tools, give them to Tamie to check them off the list. *Thank you, Bethel Council*



**\*Thank you to the volunteers who help maintain our church building!**

## Volunteers serving in December

**Altar Guild:** Jill Duncan

**Ushers:** *Ushers are needed for this month!*

**Lector:** Nancy Krull

**Greeter:** Ron Foust



## Volunteer sign-up for 2018

Go to [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org), click on **Worship**, and then **Worship Volunteer Sign Up**. Or, if you prefer, sign-up sheets will be **on the bulletin board in December!** All members are encouraged to consider where their gifts of talent lie.

## New members

We officially welcomed some new members into our Bethel community on Sunday, December 10. **Welcome, Katie, Luke, and Max Peterson and Linda and Bob Haller!**

## Church council reports due

A reminder that council reports are due **now** unless it must contain financial information. Financial reports are due **January 8, 2018**. The **Annual Meeting** is scheduled for **Sunday, January 28, 2018**.

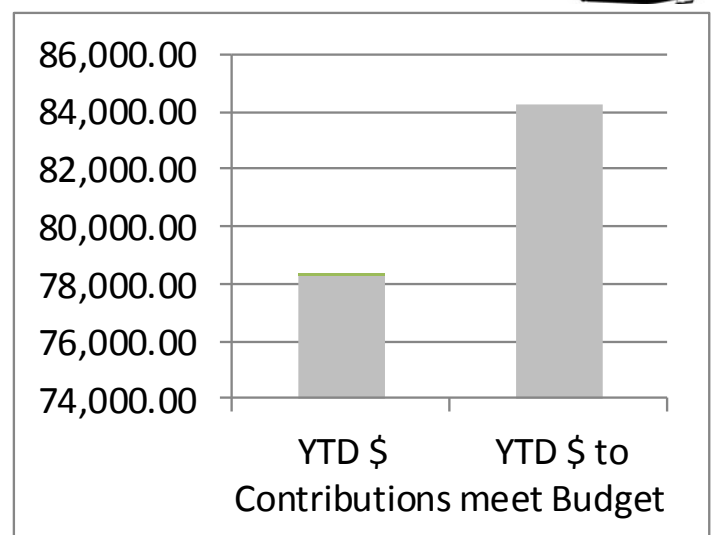
## January Bethel Messenger

The **deadline** for the January newsletter is **Monday, December 18**.



## Financial corner...

<u>For the Month of September 2017</u>	
Attendance	266
\$ Contributions	8,290.00
\$ to meet Budget	8,423.06
\$ Difference	-133.06
<u>For the Year 2017</u>	
YTD \$ Contributions	78,257.74
YTD \$ to meet Budget	84,230.60
YTD \$ Difference	-5,972.86







## BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Council Meeting Minutes –November 8, 2017

Council Members attending the meeting included Pastor Aaron, Vice President Ron Foust, Secretary Jan Smith, Treasurer Andria Carlson, Financial Secretary Lloyd Wortz, Trustee Mary Lou Teubert, Finance Committee member Matt Krull

**Opening Prayer**– Pastor Aaron opened with a prayer for a time of conflict, crisis, and disaster found in the ELW.

### Council Business

#### Pastor's Report:

- Pastor has made 5 visits, the Mark Bible study has been completed, and the kickoff for Stewardship Month went well.
- He participated in a continuing education opportunity at Luther Seminary on Suicide prevention.
- He will meet with Pastor Al from the Prairie Community Church to plan a joint Thanksgiving service Nov.19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.
- Bethel hosted the Task Force Lunch in October
- The Raise the Roof project held on November 5<sup>th</sup> was an awesome success.

#### Drainage project/report/update

Brian Duncan, a volunteer who stepped up after the request made in church on October 15<sup>th</sup> for individuals to be a part of a committee to drive the drainage project forward, shared his ideas with the council. He had studied the estimates received and had talked to city representatives about plans for city work to be done along church property in the future. According to the city plans, Lincoln Avenue is at the top of the list to be repaired, with the design currently planned to be done in 2018 and the project itself being completed in 2019. With this plan in mind, Brian recommended that Bethel postpone the drainage project until the city does the street so possibly we could coordinate the projects to best meet our needs resourcefully, economically, and effectively. In the meantime, he recommended that the drainage project committee study what should be done with the land between the church and Highway 1, since the street project will mean an assessment on church owned land along Lincoln Avenue.

### New Business

1. Resignation: Nancy Krull submitted her resignation as Bethel council president effective at the 2018 annual meeting.
2. Strategic vision: Ideas were discussed for clarifying the steps of the vision. For example, thinking about costs, what could be done the first year and so forth. This will be discussed in December.

### Old Business

1. Annual Reports: Due to Tamie by 12/1
2. Council nominations for 2018: The nominating committee has had one meeting and have nominated some people.
3. Stewardship Campaign: The global emphasis was done the first Sunday in November. The national focus will be on the Lutheran Disaster Response on November 12<sup>th</sup>, the local focus on the Food Shelf will be November 19<sup>th</sup>, and the personal focus will be November 26<sup>th</sup> and will include creating personal welcome baskets and turning in pledge cards for 2018.
4. 2018 Budget: The committee is working on this and a preliminary budget will be available in December.
5. Tamie and Kathy went to quickbooks training.

Secretary Minutes of the October Meeting, the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary Reports were all examined. Due to a lack of a quorum motions on all business issues will be completed at the December meeting. Reports will be sent out with the agenda for the meetings so they can be examined before the meeting and acted on more quickly.

**Communications Received:** A Thank you was received a read from the Koehler family.

### Other Board Reports

1. Finance - The committee met with an insurance representative and have made arrangements to meet with payroll employees as they continue to fine tune the budget.
2. Education – No report
3. Trustees – The furnace has been fixed and the ceiling in the narthex will be examined. The church sign has been updated to include information about the Spanish group services at Bethel on Saturday evenings.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and other prayer requests.



**Bethel Lutheran Church, ELCA**

77 Lincoln Ave. N.  
PO Box 207  
Lester Prairie, MN 55354



Office:  
320-395-2125  
bethellutheranlp@gmail.com  
Hours: M, W, Th 11am-5pm

Rev. Aaron Holmgren:  
320-295-8787  
pastor@lpbethel.org

**We're on the web!**

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

[www.facebook.com/lpbethel](https://www.facebook.com/lpbethel)

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

- 12/1 LuAnn Weisenburger
- 12/2 Amber Schultz
- 12/4 Harrison Jenkins
- 12/11 Riley Carlson
- 12/15 MerriLea Kylo
- 12/18 Jen Burfeind
- 12/21 Ed Ekdahl  
Ron Foust  
Tanner Iverson
- 12/31 Tim Smith  
Lisa Klobe



**DECEMBER**



**HAPPY BAPTISM DAY!**

- 12/4 Sarah Walstrom
- 12/7 Jane Larson
- 12/9 Maren Buss
- 12/15 LuAnn Weisenburger
- 12/19 Laura Grunloh
- 12/22 Abigail Cartwright
- 12/25 Jane Martin  
Nancy Krull
- 12/30 Amber Schultz

