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# CHIMES Newsletter

JANUARY 2025 VOLUME 87, ISSUE 1

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear church,

As we transition from Advent to Christmas and then to Epiphany, this time of year is marked by many shifts and changes which can be hard to keep up with. Some days we may feel like we are stumbling in the dark, especially as another calendar year begins. How did we get here? Where did the time go? How long has it been?

In a season of celebrating Christ's arrival, we may be seeking, searching, wondering, where is the light? During this time, I have found comfort in the words of Kate Bowler in her book, *Have a Beautiful, Terrible Day!* from her blessing "For Wisdom" inspired by the story of the wise men. She writes, "Blessed are we who are searching, looking for the signs, desiring above all the star, the wisdom, the light by which we might see. In our time, in our world...God, blessed are we who bow in the dark, feeling our way forward in the unknowns to wait and watch for the pinpoint of light that will be your gift to us." It is my hope and prayer that whatever this season brings for you, the truth that you are seen and loved by God will remain at the forefront of your heart and mind. As we hear in Luke's gospel, to be seen by the Lord is to be favored. Christmas blessings to you, favored one. Let us continue to seek Christ's light, together.

In peace,  
Pastor Jaime Benson

## SYNOD PILGRIMAGE

**Next summer the synod is planning a pilgrimage to The Dwelling in North Carolina for youth and adults. The dates of the program are June 22 - 28, 2025.**

The cost of the trip is \$400 per person PLUS travel expenses. The \$400 registration fee includes the food, lodging, and programming while at The Dwelling.

**Pastor Emily Norris, The Dwelling Lead Pastor and Developer, shares an invitation** and more details about what to expect in the video below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74DxKKy3iUs>

**Interested? Want to learn more? Have questions?** Please contact Pastor Jaime. Learn more about The Dwelling and the Spark'Dwell program [here](#).

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

On January 5<sup>th</sup>, we will be studying Jesus the Word, John 1:10-18.

On January 19<sup>th</sup> we will be having a game day from 10-12. All the Congregation is welcomed and encouraged to join us. We will have some games, however, feel free to bring your favorite game if you would like to. We will be having snacks and beverages.



Happy New Year from your Sunday school staff.

## CHRISTIAN FAITH-BASED CAMP SPONSORSHIP

Bethlehem Lutheran would like to help any family send their child/children to camp by offering funds to apply toward their stay. We understand that the cost keeps going up, so we are offering **\$150 per child toward a full week camping experience and \$75 per child toward a 3-day stay!**

Everyone is eligible but in order to qualify for the sponsorship, families need:

1. To be active members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church
2. Fill out the form available in the narthex. (To the right of the office door)
3. Show proof of deposit or confirmation of the week
4. Share their camp experience when finished either by a short paragraph, pictures, or talking to the congregation if they choose.

## CONFIRMATION AND YOUTH

In December the confirmation group got to together and with the help of Thrivent Financial funds, they purchased 120 stockings and filled them with goodies for the residents at Our House in Portage and Columbia Healthcare Center in Wyocena. They delivered them just before Christmas and did some caroling as well! This brought a lot of smiles to the residents.

With the help of Thrivent funds and money brought in for recycling aluminum cans, the group was able to purchase gifts for four children in the community as well!



THANK YOU

Thank you to Del Molden for picking up the Christmas tree from Silent Night Trees near Endeavor. Thank you to Jeff Melby, Dean Traut, Mike Kvalo, Joe Jackowski, Brian Conner, Brian Franson and Sherry Jahoda who brought 3 of her students to help carry the tree into the church and set it up. Thank you again to Nancy Schwenke for donating the beautiful tree in memory of her husband Ron. Thank you to Judy Traut, Angie Pace, Ann Ciske, Tania Anderson, Ben Rudolph, Kimberly Bue and Del & Margaret Molden for decorating the church for the season.



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AND REPORT

Reports for the 2024 Annual Report are due to the office no later than Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>. The Annual Congregational Meeting is February 2, 2025 after the 9:00 am worship service.



ELCA GOOD GIFTS

Thanks to your generosity, we were able to provide the following: a backpack with food; honeybees, a pig, a micro-loan and two goats through the ELCA Good Gifts program.



HELP NEEDED

Saturday, January 4<sup>th</sup> is set to remove the Christmas decorations and tree. Start time is 9:00 am. If you can help, please let Del or Margaret Molden know.



KWIK TRIP CAR WASH CARDS

Thank you to all that purchased a Kwik Trip car wash card. This raised \$1,410 for the church! The cards are now on back-order with Kwik Trip so we will look at doing this again in February. The money raised has gone into a fund set aside for the air handlers.



ACTIVITIES RESUME

Be sure and take a good look at the January calendar included in the Chimes. Quilting and Bible Study resume (all are welcome!) and there will be a Church Activity Planning Meeting on January 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm.



## THE OFFICE

### PASTOR JAIME'S AVAILABILITY

Pastor Jaime has available office hours on **Mondays from 11 am – 1 pm and Tuesdays from 9 am – 11 am**. These are drop-in hours where she will have her door open and will plan to be available for those that stop in. Appointments may be made outside of these hours, but they will need to be scheduled ahead of time unless an emergency arises. These hours are subject to change as needed given the variance of ministry. Thank you for your understanding.



### OFFERING ENVELOPES



2025 Contribution envelopes are available for pick up in the narthex. We've recycled unused envelopes but your envelope # remains the same! If you are interested in enrolling in electronic giving, there are forms in the narthex or visit our website at [www.bethlehemlcportage.org](http://www.bethlehemlcportage.org) chose "giving" and enroll.

### NEED A VISIT?

If you or a loved one are having surgery and would like a visit/call from Pastor Jaime, please let the office know. (608-742-8502) The hospital doesn't notify us of your stay due to HIPPA laws regardless if they've asked you what religion you affiliate with.



### 2024 GIVING STATEMENTS



Your 2024 giving statement will be available in mid-January.

### BAD WEATHER??



If the Portage School District is closed due to bad weather, so is the church. Any meeting, activity, practice or worship service, will be cancelled. When in doubt, stay home!

### DESIGNATE YOUR FUNDS

If you are a member of Thrivent Financial, please consider designating your Choice Dollars to the church. Also, if you have a Kwik Trip card, you can designate your reward dollars to the church. This all adds up and we greatly appreciate you!

### RAISE RIGHT FUNDRAISING NO LONGER

Effective January 1, 2025 we are no longer participating in the Raise Right Fundraising Campaign, previously known as Script. Due to shipping costs and added fees to each card, we've actually taken a loss on some orders. Thank you for your understanding.

## January 2025 BLC Worship Volunteers - Thank you!

Date	Usher	Door Monitor	Reader	Video Production	Communion Assistant	Communion Assistant	Altar Guild	Acolyte	Music	Coffee Hour
Sun 1/5 9am	Del Molden	Ann Ciske	Bobbie Goodman		Lisa Cook	Marie Kucksdorf	Marie Kucksdorf	Alyvia Bell	Carla	
Wed 1/8 5:30 pm	Geoff Gilbert	Geoff Gilbert				Cara Druckrey	Cara Druckrey	Mackenzie Schmidtke	Jody	
Sun 1/12 9am	Sandy Sween	Kory Anderson	Sandy Sween	Joe Jackowski	Barb Rothwell	Sue Conner	Sue Conner	Sofia Bell	Jody	
Wed 1/15 5:30 pm	Geoff Gilbert	Geoff Gilbert				Judy Donahue	Judy Donahue	Wyatt Hernkind	Jody	
Sun 1/19 9am	Dianna Bush	Larry Sween	Mark Teslik	Jeff Melby	Ellen Kabele	Kerry Melby	Kerry Melby	Alyvia Bell	Jody	
Wed 1/22 5:30 pm	Geoff Gilbert	Geoff Gilbert				Sharon Horvath	Sharon Horvath	Kinleyh Anderson	Carla	
Sun 1/26 9am	Dean Traut	Mike Kvalo	Angela Pace		Lyn Holmes	Lisa Cook	Lisa Cook	Sofia Bell	Carla	
Wed 1/29 5:30 pm	Geoff Gilbert	Geoff Gilbert				Cara Druckrey	Cara Druckrey	Lindsay Nickel	Carla	

***Food Pantry Help is Team A for the Month of January!***

# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

## Profit and Loss Comparison

December 1-23, 2024

	TOTAL				
	DEC 1-23, 2024	DEC 1-23, 2023 (PY)	NOV 1-23, 2024 (PP)	JAN 1 - DEC 23, 2024 (YTD)	JAN 1 - DEC 23, 2023 (PY YTD)
▼ Income					
▶ Operating Income	17,067.76	22,421.31	16,917.40	276,796.86	270,334.44
▶ Other Designated Income	4,532.00	18,541.56	163.50	26,808.25	82,110.43
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$21,599.76</b>	<b>\$40,962.87</b>	<b>\$17,080.90</b>	<b>\$303,605.11</b>	<b>\$352,444.87</b>
GROSS PROFIT	\$21,599.76	\$40,962.87	\$17,080.90	\$303,605.11	\$352,444.87
▶ Expenses	\$26,145.75	\$25,054.09	\$13,018.90	\$274,643.28	\$323,442.82
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$ -4,545.99	\$15,908.78	\$4,062.00	\$28,961.83	\$29,002.05
▶ Other Income	\$3,200.00	\$3,100.00	\$2,050.00	\$21,545.00	\$32,465.00
▶ Other Expenses	\$3,037.51	\$1,810.23	\$1,998.70	\$20,875.56	\$31,703.41
NET OTHER INCOME	\$162.49	\$1,289.77	\$51.30	\$669.44	\$761.59
NET INCOME	\$ -4,383.50	\$17,198.55	\$4,113.30	\$29,631.27	\$29,763.64
<b>Net Cash Income</b>				<b>\$-2531.45</b>	<b>\$-1248.86</b>

# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

# January



<p>5</p> <p>9:00am Worship</p> <p>10:15am Sunday School</p>	<p>6</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p> <p>1:00pm Card Club </p> <p>5:00pm Finance Meeting</p> <p>6:30pm Church Activity Planning Meeting</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:00am Quilters</p>	<p>8</p> <p>No Worship Service</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p> <p>Food Pantry Helpers </p> <p>5:30pm Worship</p> <p>6:30pm Confirmation</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9:00am Women's meeting</p> <p></p>	<p>10</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Remove Christmas decorations</p>
<p>12</p> <p>9:00am Kinship Mentoring Speaker</p> <p>9:00am Worship</p>	<p>13</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p> <p>1:00pm Card Club </p> <p>6:00pm SREA Meeting</p> <p>7:00pm Worship &amp; Music meeting</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9:00am Quilters</p> <p>11:00am Bible Study </p>	<p>15</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p> <p>5:30pm Worship</p> <p>6:30pm Confirmation Class</p>	<p>16</p> <p>6:30pm Church Council meeting</p> <p></p>	<p>17</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p>	<p>18</p> <p>10:00am Fellowship hall reserved</p>
<p>19</p> <p>9:00am 2024 Annual Report available</p> <p>9:00am Worship</p> <p>10:15am Sunday School</p>	<p>20</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p> <p>1:00pm Card Club </p> <p>6:30pm SRA Meeting</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9:00am Quilters</p>	<p>22</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p> <p>5:30pm Worship</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <p>9:00am Worship</p>	<p>27</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi </p> <p>1:00pm Card Club </p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:00am Quilters</p> <p>11:00am Bible Study </p>	<p>29</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p> <p>5:30pm Worship</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>10:30am Tai Chi</p>	

The CHIMES is published monthly by Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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**Deadline for copy is the 20<sup>th</sup>** of the month prior to publication. Editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.

Annual Congregational  
Meeting February 2, 2025  
10:00 am