

# BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

## CHIMES Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2021 VOLUME 83, ISSUE 11

### MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JAIME

Grace and peace to you, BLC Community!

It is such a privilege and honor to write this note to you as your new pastor! My first few weeks at Bethlehem have been full of fun and lots of learning. On my first Sunday I did share that I would not be using the sermon time to introduce myself. I thought my first newsletter article might be a better place to share a bit more about myself as we continue to get to know one another better.

I grew up in Lodi, WI (just down the road from Portage) and attended UW Madison and graduated with a bachelor's degree in biochemistry. After college, I went right to Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota and graduated from there this past June. How did I go from biochemistry to ministry? That's a great question! The short answer is God had other plans. My parents still live in Lodi, along with my sister, her husband and their two daughters. My brother, his wife, and their three sons live in Georgia, and it is always exciting when the whole family is back together. I really enjoy spending time with my family and am grateful to be back closer to them again after being away for seminary and internship over the past few years. When my family and I get together we often have at least one game of Euchre, if not a few. I have picked up a few new hobbies in the past couple of years including hiking, knitting, and tending to my plants. Additionally, I enjoy playing games with family and friends, spending time outside, and reading.

One of the things I really love about ministry and being a pastor is being there for people whether things are going well, not so well, or anything in between. I am so blessed to be able to be here with all of you and I want you all to know that I am here for you to support you as your pastor. My door is open, and I have enjoyed having some of you stopping by already and introducing yourselves. In the days and weeks ahead, I am looking forward to getting to know all of you better. With that, I would like to leave you with my favorite Bible verse. I pray it gives you comfort as you need because it has given me much comfort in my life and continues to do so still today.

*Do not fear for I am with you, do not be afraid for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.*  
Isaiah 41:10

God's blessings to you,  
Pastor Jaime



### UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 1

Food Drives Begins

NOVEMBER 2

5 pm Finance Meeting

NOVEMBER 8

All Committee Night

NOVEMBER 9

Women's Group 9 am

NOVEMBER 14

New Member Orientation 10:15 am

NOVEMBER 18

Council Meeting 6:30 pm

NOVEMBER 25

Thanksgiving (office closed)

NOVEMBER 26

Office closed for holiday

NOVEMBER 28 – ADVENT

Last day of Food Drive

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church, ELCA**

W8267 Hwy 33 East, Portage, WI

53901 608-742-8502

Email: [bethluch15@gmail.com](mailto:bethluch15@gmail.com)

[pastor.jaime.benson@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.jaime.benson@gmail.com)

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

"BELIEVE THERE IS GOOD IN THE WORLD."

- UNKNOWN



RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS  
FOUNDATION  
[www.randomactsofkindness.org](http://www.randomactsofkindness.org)

## OUR CHURCH

### MISSION KIT SENT!

# THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who purchased items, ordered items, donated money, and assembled the Mission Kits. We sent to Lutheran World Relief along with our Quilts:

- School Kits: 49
- Personal Care Kits: 78
- Fabric Kits: 2



This will be an ongoing project, so we will still collect them for Lutheran World Relief. Stay tuned for more information. The collection shelf will remain in the Narthex. For more information call Janice Petersen or Jeannette Gessner.

### MISSION QUILTS

Once again our quilts are ready to go to new homes, keeping people warm or even used as shelter. We have sent quilts personally to Native Americans, the needy right here in Portage and Montello when their homes sustained damage or other needs. We have sold a few. Our accumulated funds were such that we split them with the church to help pay bills. We do not use church funds to sustain ourselves.

Cloe Rehdantz has sewn 1,197 tops for our quilts these past 18 years. Angie Bucholtz probably cut most of those squares. The time of Marie Rohrbacher, Ginny Paulson, Ann Ciske, Margaret Molden, Linda Lewis, and

Dorothy Waldo, plus help from Cheryl Hebel and others, went into producing the quilts.

This year because of Covid, we have 40 quilts to ship. Jim Crawford has graciously taken that job on.

We meet Tuesday mornings 9 am to 11 am September through May with exception of the month of December, a very busy month for all of us, so we take that month off.

### NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION



Are you or someone you know interested in becoming a member at Bethlehem? Join Pr.

Jaime for a new member orientation on Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 am. Contact her or the office if you'd like to attend, or just come and join her that day.

### WOMEN'S GROUP

Elayne Hanson will be giving a talk about poetry at the next Women's Group on Thursday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at 9am. All women of the church are welcome. We will meet in the fellowship hall.



### REMEMBERING LOVED ONES

We would like to honor and remember all those who have gone before us on All Saints Day, which we will celebrate on Sunday, November 7th. Please submit the names of your loved ones to the church office by Monday, November 1st so we can include them into the bulletin. Thank you.



### FOOD DRIVE



We will continue to collect food for the Portage Food Pantry until Sunday, November 28<sup>th</sup>.

## NEW STORAGE SHED

Thanks to the several volunteers, we have constructed an additional 10 x 24 outside storage space for the newly purchased lawnmower. Included in the space is a separate storage space for youth outside activity games. The following is a list of the volunteers who contributed a total of 175 manhours in the construction of the addition and relocation of the basketball hoop: Tom Benson, Jeff Johnson, Tim Kratz, Butch Jahoda, Margaret Molden, Justice Oh, Jack Paulson, Jeff Melby and Del Molden.

Many thanks! Del Molden



## COMMITTEE UPDATES

We are looking to fill some spots on a few different committees: **Stewardship, Personnel & Church Council.**

- Stewardship: we technically don't have a committee right now are looking for people to help out. Stewardship covers projects such as the annual ministry fair (time & talents), volunteer appreciation,

financial planning workshops, the annual stewardship campaign, other special projects.

- Personnel: handles all employee related matters – looking for people with human resource or management background
- Church Council: two spots will be open in 2022. Council is a three year term.

Please prayerfully consider being involved and joining one of these committees. Contact the office if you are interested.



## WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS

The Local & Global Committee will help with River Haven on a new campaign called "We Rise by Lifting Others". This is a community-wide campaign that promotes helping our members and others in need which, in return, will help River Haven. During this campaign, Bethlehem volunteers will help others with small projects, yard work, etc. and encourage that person to make a financial donation to River Haven in return for the work. This will be in lieu of "God's Work, Our Hands" this year. There are volunteer forms you can pick up in the narthex. If you volunteer, please fill out one of these forms and return it to River Haven.

If you are in need of some help around your home with a project, please let us know.



## GIFTS OF BETHLEHEM



We are looking for talent for our annual Gifts of Bethlehem concert which will be held Sunday, December 12. Because the guidelines with COVID-19 may change, we are planning to livestream this event over YouTube if we

are not able to gather in person. Because of this, we will need to make sure that our performers choose songs that are in the public domain. Public domain music is music that is not under copyright. Examples of this are Away in a Manger, The First Noel, Go Tell it on the Mountain, Joy to the World, Silent Night, and numerous others. Please contact the office or Tania Anderson at 608-697-5999 if you would like to perform in the concert this year and need assistance selecting a song.

## GIFTS OF BETHLEHEM AUCTION



We will once again have an auction the week before the event. It will take place both online and in person. We will be collecting gift baskets until Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, which you can drop off at the church office. The auction will be

open for one week starting Sunday, December 5th and closing the day of the concert. You can view the items online and in person during office hours or after worship service to bid in person. Watch the bulletin, Chimes and/or our website for more details in December.

## SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING

The Salvation Army has been serving Columbia County for many years. The work is carried out by volunteers living and working in our communities. Last year they helped 427 people with emergency situations and over 1,000 people through the special projects they support. Here are some highlights of what they are doing locally:

- Utility assistance
- Emergency lodging
- Rental assistance
- Transportation emergencies



- Special projects such as hygiene kits, taxi tickets, back to school, etc.
- Annual coat drive

They are in need of bell ringers for the Christmas Kettle Campaign. If you are interested please contact the office.

## CARD CLUB – NEW TIME



The Monday night card club will be changing their meeting time to 1 pm on Mondays for the winter months starting November 15th.

## FROM THE COUNCIL

A letter to the Congregation:

This letter is to inform you of an overpayment situation that was an error on our part.

Pastor Jen opted to have an extra amount of money for pretax retirement & additional benefits withheld from her paycheck beginning in September 2018 and each month afterwards until July 2021. The money was sent to Portico (Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and was to be deducted from her paycheck each month. This paycheck deduction did not happen and resulted in an overpayment of \$13,834.96.

When the financial records were gone over in July, BLC staff found the overpayment. We contacted Portico and were given options on how to move forward. They informed us that only the pretax retirement money would have been able to be recouped. Pastor Jen was contacted to discuss the situation and options. She stated she would contact an attorney and the bishop for advice.

After exploring the options available, the Finance Committee made a recommendation to the Church Council to not move forward in attempting to retrieve the overpayment. At the October 21st Church Council meeting it was decided that, since the overpayment was a mistake on our part, we would not pursue recouping the money. After discovering the error and exploring our options moving forward, we want to assure you that now all records are in order and will remain so in the future. This does not change the financial results that have been reported year to date.

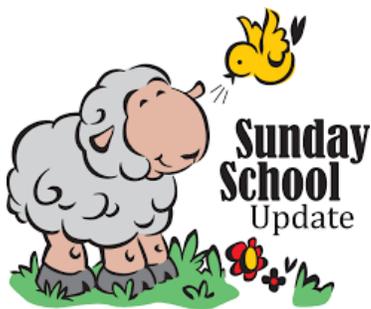
We are sharing this information with all of you to ensure transparency on an error that was made. Our community is committed to honesty and trust, and we want to not only hold these values but embody them as

well. If you have questions or want more information, you can attend the November 18th or December 16th council meeting in the Fellowship Hall at 6:30 pm or request a Zoom link if you cannot attend in person.

Sincerely,  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council  
Ann Ciske, President

## FAITH FORMATION

### SUNDAY SCHOOL



Starting November 7th, we will be having Sunday School from 10-11 am instead of 10:15-11:15 am. Don't forget to turn you clocks back for daylight saving time. Our lessons for

November are The Widows Offering-Mark 12:38-44, Be Ready-Mark 23:1-8, Christ The King-John 18:33-37 and A Good Ruler-Jeremiah 33:14-17.

We will have Sunday school on Sunday, November 28th. We are starting to work on the music for Gifts of Bethlehem. We are looking for another person to help with music.

We are very grateful to have your child/ren in Sunday School this year. If you have any questions or are interested in helping, please contact Jeanette Gessner at 742-8369/617-5228.

## CONFIRMATION

*Congratulations!* 

Congratulation to our 9<sup>th</sup> Graders who were confirmed Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>:

Jack Brenner  
Olivia Bue  
Kane Chappell  
Ian Hayes  
Maxwell Johnson  
Max Kreuziger  
Ethan Macomber  
Samantha Nickel  
Grady Saalsaa  
Allyson Zabler

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

### REMEMBER TO TURN YOUR CLOCKS BACK



*November 7th*

### LEARN HOW TO RUN WORSHIP LIVESTREAM



We are looking for more people who would like to be trained on how to run the video equipment to live stream Sunday worship. This position helps us reach our members who are not able to join us in person. ***It is a***

***blessing that we are able to offer this service with the volunteers we have. We would like to be able to continue, but we really do need more help.*** A huge thank you to all who have been helping already. If you are interested, please contact the office.

### TEXT MESSAGE OPT-IN

We have a great feature in our church database that allows us to send out text messages to our members. These messages would be for the following: meeting reminders, special announcements, event reminders, Christian education updates, inclement weather closings. You can sign up by going to this website:



<https://bethlehempottage.360members.com/opt-in/texting>



You can take a picture of this QR code with your smart phone's camera and it will take you directly to the website to sign up.

## CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING



The church office will be closed Thursday, November 25<sup>th</sup> and Friday, November 26<sup>th</sup> for the Thanksgiving holiday.

## WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS



We are in need of all positions for all weeks in November. Sign up in the narthex or on our website.

## OFFERING ENVELOPES



So not to waste resources, we will be using up the envelopes from last year's order, which means that everyone that receives paper envelopes will receive a new envelope number. If you would like to forgo the paper envelopes and just receive a number, **please let the office know before November 29th.**

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

### Bethlehem Lutheran Church

#### Profit and Loss Comparison October 1-20, 2021

	TOTAL				
	OCT 1-20, 2021	OCT 1-20, 2020 (PY)	SEP 1-20, 2021 (PP)	JAN 1 - OCT 20, 2020 (PY YTD)	JAN 1 - OCT 20, 2021 (YTD)
Income					
Income	15,797.53	27,878.54	12,864.00	227,435.89	205,505.29
Other Income	1,545.75	890.00	1,435.00	9,282.68	26,496.23
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$17,343.28</b>	<b>\$28,768.54</b>	<b>\$14,299.00</b>	<b>\$236,718.57</b>	<b>\$232,001.52</b>
GROSS PROFIT	\$17,343.28	\$28,768.54	\$14,299.00	\$236,718.57	\$232,001.52
Expenses					
Operating Expenses	10,044.02	14,941.51	8,196.82	192,077.06	177,329.84
Other Expense			70.00	3,285.76	5,888.17
Unapplied Cash Bill Payment Exp...				0.00	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$10,044.02</b>	<b>\$14,941.51</b>	<b>\$8,266.82</b>	<b>\$195,362.82</b>	<b>\$183,218.01</b>
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$7,299.26	\$13,827.03	\$6,032.18	\$41,355.75	\$48,783.51
Other Income	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$2,045.00	\$9,004.88	\$22,789.19
Other Expenses	\$496.25	\$0.00	\$1,933.55	\$8,612.22	\$21,867.05
NET OTHER INCOME	\$3.75	\$0.00	\$111.45	\$392.66	\$922.14
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$7,303.01</b>	<b>\$13,827.03</b>	<b>\$6,143.63</b>	<b>\$41,748.41</b>	<b>\$49,705.65</b>

Cash basis Wednesday, October 20, 2021 11:50 AM GMT-05:00

# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

# November 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <b>HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE</b> Continues to Nov 28	<b>1</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 6:30 pm Card Club   <b>ALL COMMITTEENIGHT</b>	<b>2</b> 9:00 am Quilters 5:00 pm Finance	<b>3</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship 6:30 pm Confirmation	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi	<b>6</b> J Gessner Fellowship Hall
<b>7</b> 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Sunday School   	<b>8</b> <b>MEETING</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 6:00 pm SREA meeting 6:30 pm All Committee Meeting 6:30 pm Card Club	<b>9</b> 9:00 am Quilters	<b>10</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship 6:30 pm Confirmation	<b>11</b> 9:00 am Women's Group  	<b>12</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Sunday School 10:15 am New member class  	<b>15</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 1:00 pm Card Club 6:30 pm SRA	<b>16</b> 9:00 am Quilters	<b>17</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship 6:30 pm Confirmation	<b>18</b> 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting	<b>19</b> Chimes Articles Due 10:30 am Tai Chi	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Sunday School	<b>22</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 1:00 pm Card Club	<b>23</b> 9:00 am Quilters	<b>24</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship 6:30 pm Confirmation	<b>25</b> Church Office closed  	<b>26</b> Church Office closed 10:30 am Tai Chi  	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> First Sunday of Advent 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Sunday School Last day of Food Drive	<b>29</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 1:00 pm Card Club	<b>30</b> 9:00 am Quilters	 Hello November			

