

# CHIMES Newsletter

OCTOBER 2020 VOLUME 82, ISSUE 10

## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JEN...

Greetings! In the time of our shared ministry we have re-embraced our identity as “God’s Family Serving Christ with Love” to one degree or another. I’m hoping to use this space for us to look at our shared identity and see what God is saying to us in this. The plan is to focus on one aspect of this identity in the next three editions of The Chimes. My continuing hope is that we can somehow enter into a shared discernment regarding how each of these three aspects are reflected in our life together as a church family.

Of course, I realize how this sharing is hindered by our current situation in the pandemic. All the same, I have faith in our ability in the Holy Spirit to come up with a way (or ways) that we can share. I’m sensing that this is some important stuff we should be doing. Thank you.

### “God’s Family Serving Christ with Love”

#### Serving Christ:

I am assuming everyone had some deep discussions with family and friends this past month around the question, “What does it mean to be God’s Family?” 😊 In all truthfulness, I wonder if we truly think about the implications of claiming ourselves as God’s Family. Do we look at it mainly from an inward perspective? How does this matter to me? How does being part of the BLC family help me? And so forth... Do we see our church family through an outward lens, as the hands and feet of Christ, embracing and helping a broken world?

I’d hope that, overall, we see ourselves in a balance of views. My hope is that our action statement in our identity, **Serving Christ**, is one where we uplift, support, and nurture one another in a relationship of faith. My continued hope is that through and in our faith family we share that same Spirit with our neighbors near and far.

We serve one another, thereby serving Christ using our God-given, Spirit-infused gifts. Traditionally we have referred to these as gifts of our time and talents, focusing on what individuals contribute together. I’d like to offer another twist on spiritual gifts in what author, Rev. Eric H. F. Law calls **Holy Currencies**. Holy currencies flow from God’s abundance, even when we perceive scarcity in our midst. Holy currencies consider the value of gifts that extend beyond monetary and are a vital part of being Church. Holy currencies reorient our focus from doing church to being church.

Holy currencies are:

- The Currency of Relationship
- The Currency of Truth
- The Currency of Wellness
- The Currency of Gracious Leadership
- The Currency of Time and Place
- The Currency of Money



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### OCTOBER 4

First Indoor 9am worship service

### OCTOBER 6

Finance Meeting 6 pm

### OCTOBER 15

Council Meeting – 6:30 pm

### OCTOBER 16

Chimes articles due to office

### OCTOBER 18

Fall Festival

### OCTOBER 25

Confirmation Sunday

## JOIN US WEEKLY

### TUESDAYS



9am Quilters



11am Bible Study

## Bethlehem Lutheran Church, ELCA

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These currencies are a part of what Rev. Law terms *The Cycle of Blessings*. These blessings are present in every family of faith, whether we recognize them easily or not. It is in the recognition and living into this Cycle of Blessings that a congregation grows into God's mission.

The book is [Holy Currencies: 6 Blessings for Sustainable Missional Ministries](#), by Eric H. F. Law and published by Chalice Press. I'm on my second reading of the book, with my colleagues on the Synod Renewal Team. It would be interesting to know what your reflections are, after you might read this book, too. So, I invite you to get a copy or download it on Kindle and explore this book. Share with me what you find! Maybe you will see something I didn't or notice how God is working in us in one or more of the holy currencies.

Amen, amen, AMEN!

Pastor Jen

## OUR CHURCH

### COVID-19 TASK FORCE UPDATE

We know that as the weather turns cold, windy and wet, we will not be able to have Pastor Jen stand outside to lead drive-in worship. With that in mind, we are moving forward to offer indoor worship services using precautions and safety measures. What will this look like?

- This will begin Sunday, October 4th
- We will open service up on Sundays at 9am and Wednesdays at 5:30 pm and allow 10% of our sanctuary's capacity, which is 30 people.
- Reservations will be required by either calling the church office or making a reservation on our website
- Masks will be required
- Social distancing will be required
- Ushers will be trained to manage the flow of traffic in and out of the sanctuary
- The 9am service will also be streamed on our YouTube channel for those that are not comfortable or able to come in person.

We will continue to offer the 10 am drive-in worship on Sundays while the weather is nice. It is our goal to offer two indoor worship services on Sundays.

### RENEWAL UPDATE



The Renewal Team and Council met with Rev. Walter Baires on August 26th via Zoom to reflect upon the progress of the renewal process at Bethlehem Lutheran Church (BLC). Following this meeting, the Renewal Team met on September 3rd to discuss the recommendations that Rev. Baires had for us moving forward. We would like to propose the following "next steps":

1. Due to COVID-19, the completion of the goals for two of the renewal has been delayed. The focus for year two is, "determining the gifts and assets of our congregation". We would like to schedule online and in-person focus groups to respond to the question, "where is God calling us to go?"
2. Also, we would like to create discussion/study groups based upon *Dwelling in the Word*, as recommended by Rev. Baires, understanding that this is not simply a step in the process that needs to be completed. *Dwelling in the Word* is the practice that is the spiritual foundation for renewal, and it helps us to build relationships with one another. It's a practice that is integral to who we are as followers of Christ, and one that we grow into, as opposed to a "once and done" action. Dwelling in the Word study groups would become a permanent part of the culture at BLC, beyond year 3 of the renewal. We will offer online and in-person options for these discussion/study groups.

**We would like your feedback** on the steps outlined here. Please complete a short survey by **Friday, October 9th** so that we can finalize our plan for year three of the renewal. You can find the survey using [THIS LINK](#) or if you receive the Chimes in the mail, a hard copy is enclosed.

#### FAITH STORY...FROM JULIE SAALSAA

I grew up in a very large family, I'm the youngest of 13 children. So, just by saying that, you are probably assuming I grew up Catholic. Well, you are correct. My experience as a child and youth in my church was a positive one; my family was very active in our church. My parents modeled their faith inside and outside of the church building. I felt very connected to my church family then and also to the Spirit. I can remember four very specific times in my life where the presence of the Holy Spirit and Christ were very real.

The first was when I was in 3rd grade. I cannot remember the specifics, but I remember sitting in our beautiful church building and experiencing the presence of the Holy Spirit. When I think about that day, I can see it clearly in my mind's eye, but it is hard to put into words. Even after many years, I can remember the feeling of comfort, support and love, like a cozy blanket wrapped around my shoulders on a chilly fall day.

The second and third times were at very pivotal moments in my life. Times where I was faced with making hard life discussions and unsure of what I should do. Anyone that knows me well, knows that I have trouble making decisions. So as you can imagine I've had many little moments where I couldn't make up my mind, but these two times were memorable because I had prayed for help and help arrived. While very deep in prayer, I heard and saw Christ very clearly. I felt like He was actually there with me, to help guide me in the right direction.

The last time was recent. This time I wasn't asking for help, but it was again a time in my life where I was making a change. I had just graduated school for my nutrition consulting certification and was starting my own business. I was sitting in church here at Bethlehem during our meeting when we were deciding on the parish secretary position. It was like I felt a tap on my shoulder and a whisper in my ear, "you need to apply for this position". I had no intention to get job because I was starting my new career, but it was very clear the Spirit was calling me here.

Even though I have had these amazing memorable moments of feeling connected, I still

struggle with feeling "connected" spiritually on a regular basis. I think this is human. What I have learned though, is that God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are constant. Even when I may waver, get too busy with life, or feel lost, I can turn to Them and know They will always be there to guide me, to love me. Learning to slow down, open my heart and senses to hear the messages sent. Learning to have faith that in situations I cannot control there is a reason for what happens to us. Learning to trust. They haven't steered me wrong yet. *Julie Saalsaa*

*Want to share your faith story or moment when you felt God present in your life? Contact Pastor Jen or the church office.*

#### BOB REHDANTZ MEMORIAL DRIVE-THRU BRAT-FRY



Thank you to all who volunteered and for those who stayed and purchased a brat or hotdog. We were able to raise a little over \$1,000 for the ministries of BLC.

#### CALL COMMITTEE

On September 13<sup>th</sup> we voted for 6 members to be on the Call Committee. Those members are: Bonnie Dixon, John Denhartigh, Jeff Melby, Melissa Bradbury, Kathryn Crawford, and Tina Thomas.

#### GIFTS OF BETHLEHEM – A VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



Planning is underway for the 2020 Gifts of Bethlehem Christmas program at BLC. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, this program may be a little different this year. However, we will still need your participation!!

We are looking for volunteers that would like to share their musical talents with us. We are also looking for gift baskets, gift certificates, and craft fair items to be donated to the church for our online auction. Similar to last year, a portion of the proceeds from this online auction will be donated to the River Haven Homeless Shelter and our local PACAP program.

If you have a musical talent that you would like to share with us, please contact Tania Anderson: 608-697-5999.

If you have an item that you would like to donate for the online auction, please contact Ann Ciske (608-742-6816) or church office.

## PONDERING JESUS READINGS



As part of the Faith Formation classes for the young children, congregation members are reading short Bible stories from the Spark Story Bible. This program is called Pondering Jesus in your PJs. Members can record themselves reading a story or come to the office and Julie will record it for you. Sign up by calling Ann Ciske (608-742-6816) or the office. Stories will be posted to the website for children and their families to access on Wednesday nights.

## FALL FESTIVAL

BLC is hosting another drive-thru Brat Fry on Sunday, October 18th as a part of our Fall Festival and we need your help! Volunteers are needed to work the drive-thru and we also need people willing to decorate pumpkins that we will be selling as a fundraiser. **Fall Festival Volunteer Sign up [HERE](#)**



## WOMEN'S GROUP

Bethlehem's Women's Group will be gathering at the church on the second Thursday of the month starting on October 8th. We will be meeting mainly as a get together for continuity of the

group during this time of the pandemic. Social distancing and masks will be required in order to attend.



## QUILT DRAWING

Get your tickets for this beautiful 70"x74" quilt drawing. This quilt was handcrafted with love by: Christie Rhinehart, Joanne Hanson, and Denise Bandt of Starry Lane Quilting. Tickets available at the church office during office hours or [HERE](#) on our website. The quilt is on display at church.



## WINTER COAT DRIVE



We working with the Salvation Army's "Coats of Many Colors" coat drive again this year. Accepting gently used clean winter

coats & boots, infant to adult. There is a special need for children's sizes. They can be dropped off in Narthex during office hours or at the Portage Police Department.

## FAITH FORMATION

### 2020-21 REGISTRATION



Faith Formation

If your child was enrolled in Sunday school or Confirmation last year, you should have received an email OR letter in the mail. If you did not receive one, please contact the church office. If your child is new to the program, you can **REGISTER HERE**. If you need a hard copy of the form, please contact the church office. There is a new page on our website: **Faith Formation**. This is where families can access all the resources for Sunday School and Confirmation.

### CONFIRMATION WORSHIP NOTES

The worship notes form received an update. If you are worshipping from home or in the car, you can access an online form on the Faith Formation page of our website.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

### REALLY NEED HELP: WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Lately it has been a struggle to find people to volunteer to be ushers and readers for worship. In order for us to provide service and have it run smoothly, we really do need your help. It will be especially important as we move indoors. Please sign up **HERE** to help out or call the office. Thank you!



### SUNDAY WORSHIP YOUTUBE LIVE

We continue to broadcast Sunday service online on our YouTube channel. Here is a link to for that:



[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoSzJf\\_AoUrRGWpmtqNNeyg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoSzJf_AoUrRGWpmtqNNeyg)

Remember you can also find everything you need on our website as well:

<https://bethlehemlcportage.org/>

## Bethlehem Lutheran Church

### PROFIT AND LOSS COMPARISON

September 1-21, 2020

	TOTAL				
	SEP 1-21, 2020	SEP 1-21, 2019 (PY)	AUG 1-21, 2020 (PP)	JAN 1 - SEP 21, 2020 (YTD)	JAN 1 - SEP 21, 2019 (PY YTD)
<b>Income</b>					
Income	15,925.88	13,507.13	13,064.70	196,713.36	186,214.44
Other Income	175.00	4,266.00	570.00	8,307.68	24,458.01
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$16,100.88</b>	<b>\$17,773.13</b>	<b>\$13,634.70</b>	<b>\$205,021.04</b>	<b>\$210,672.45</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$16,100.88</b>	<b>\$17,773.13</b>	<b>\$13,634.70</b>	<b>\$205,021.04</b>	<b>\$210,672.45</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$12,989.16</b>	<b>\$10,453.36</b>	<b>\$7,320.44</b>	<b>\$176,484.83</b>	<b>\$188,473.46</b>
<b>NET OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>\$3,111.72</b>	<b>\$7,319.77</b>	<b>\$6,314.26</b>	<b>\$28,536.21</b>	<b>\$22,198.99</b>
Other Income	\$1,500.00	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$9,004.88	\$15,162.01
Other Expenses	\$1,448.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,612.22	\$13,796.45
<b>NET OTHER INCOME</b>	<b>\$52.00</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$392.66</b>	<b>\$1,365.56</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$3,163.72</b>	<b>\$7,344.77</b>	<b>\$6,314.26</b>	<b>\$28,928.87</b>	<b>\$23,564.55</b>

# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

# October 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 10:30 am Tai Chi	3
4 9:00 am Worship Indoors/Online 10:00 am Outdoor worship	5 10:30 am Tai Chi	6 9:00 am Quilters 11:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Finance Committee	7 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship - Outdoors 7:00 pm Confirmation Grades 6th - 8th Via Zoom 7:30 pm Confirmation 9th Grade via Zoom	8	9 10:30 am Tai Chi	10
11 9:00 am Worship Indoors/Online 10:00 am Outdoor worship	12 10:30 am Tai Chi 6:00 pm SREA meeting	13 9:00 am Quilters 11:00 am Bible Study	14 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship - Outdoors 7:00 pm Confirmation Grades 6th - 8th Via Zoom 7:30 pm Confirmation 9th Grade via Zoom	15 6:30 pm Council Meeting	16 Chimes Articles Due 10:30 am Tai Chi	17
18 9:00 am Worship Indoors/Online 10:00 am Outdoor worship 	19 10:30 am Tai Chi 6:30 pm SRA meeting	20 9:00 am Quilters 11:00 am Bible Study	21 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship - Outdoors 7:00 pm Confirmation Grades 6th - 8th Via Zoom 7:30 pm Confirmation 9th Grade via Zoom	22	23 10:30 am Tai Chi	24
25 Confirmation 9:00 am Worship Indoors/Online 10:00 am Outdoor worship 	26 10:30 am Tai Chi	27 9:00 am Quilters 11:00 am Bible Study	28 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship - Outdoors 7:00 pm Confirmation Grades 6th - 8th Via Zoom	29	30 10:30 am Tai Chi	31

