

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026



Birthdays: January 1- Filmore Gustafson, Justin Peterson; January 2- Donna Bofenkamp; January 3- Curt Faist, Caty Hoepner; January 4- Deb Dngdahl, Jolene Smith; January 6- Amy Letsche; January 8- Pat Hyndman; January 11- Drew Puhmann, Clarence Rasmus; January 14- Dave VanNatta; January 15- Tracy Hoepner, Dylan Husman; January 18- Jill Simonsen; January 19- Tyler Faist, Austin Curtis; January 22- Hunter Morrow; January 24- Nic Ebert; January 25- Erika Weeks; January 26- Ethan Combes; January 27- Jacob Kindwall; January 28- Zoe Curtis; January 30- Frank Brodale, Gladys Mortenson, Roger Mummert; January 31- Barb Mummert, Zac Woods



Anniversaries: January 6- Duane & Rhonda Reinholdt; January 7- Derek & Rachel Simonsen; January 15- Bruce & Karal Schuknecht; January 17- Kurt & Cheryl Peterson

Lectors Needed for January: Bethlehem is looking for volunteers to read during both Saturday night and Sunday services during the month of January. If you are interested in reading, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex or contact the office.



Annual Report Information Due: Information for the Annual Report is due from Committee Chairs. Please email to blcelca@gmail.com or drop off in the office as soon as possible.



2026 Sign-up Sheets: Sheets are now available in the Narthex to sign up for flowers, Bethlehem on the Air, Mission Support, and Lector for those who are interested in signing up for 2026!

In Search of Readers for Saturday Nights & Bethlehem on the Air: Harry Bradstreet has read the scriptures on Saturday night and the Gospel for Bethlehem on the Air for the last several years. He is retiring from reading after the first of the year, giving others an opportunity to serve the church in those ways. If you are interested in reading on Saturday nights, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex. If you would like to read for Bethlehem on the Air, please contact Jim Mohn or Lynette Hyndman. Thank you, Harry, for faithfully providing this service to the church for many years!



Thank You: Thank you to the church ladies' circles for their part in making and distributing Christmas goodies to some of us older folks. A special thank you to Joanne Tapper for bringing me a loaf of specialty bread and some delicious soup. God Bless you!
– Harry Bradstreet

Thank you to the ladies of WELCA for thinking of me, and thanks to JoAnne Tapper for making and delivering the bread. – Joane Burgeson

Thank you everyone who sent me cards while I was home with my injured knee. Also, thank you Pat for the good bread. – Annabelle Prunty

Valentine Gift Cards For Our College Students: Our WELCA ladies will again be mailing a Valentine card with a gift card enclosed to each of our college students. If you would like to make a donation to help pay for those, please make it out to WELCA and “put gift card donation” in the memo. You can give it to Lynde Lundquist or Ellen Peters, or bring it to the church office. We have 25 students that we will be remembering with a gift card this year. All donations will be welcomed to help with this expense!



Thanks So Much!!- We enjoyed a wonderful start to the season of Advent again this year with our traditional Scandinavian Advent Supper! Thanks to all of you who helped with the preparation of the food, donation of delicious desserts, and assisting with the serving and cleanup. Things moved smoothly, thanks to the youth and their parents lending a hand! It's wonderful to watch the fellowship and fun that happens when everyone joins together to make this event so enjoyable! How blessed we are to share the love of the Lord and feel His presence among us! Have a Christ filled New Year!

Evangelism In Action

Our December Welcome Plate meal was held on **Saturday, December 27th from Noon-1:00 pm.** We served a choice of three soups, grilled cheese sandwiches, Watergate salad, a variety of Christmas goodies, and drinks. Thanks to the many people who helped in the kitchen, lead devotions, and assisted with the HyVee baked goods, Papa's Pantry, and the Caring Closet. We served 84, with 15 deliveries and 25 carry outs. Our guests were welcomed by our members to a warm meal and a time of fellowship! Jesus was helping us to brighten their lives and share the love of the Lord!

Thank you so much for your generous donations to Papa's Pantry, as many are looking to us for assistance. If you are out shopping consider donating some items: cereal, pasta sauce, peanut butter, jelly, juices, pickles, Hamburger Helper, soups, canned spaghetti, snack crackers, pudding mixes, cake mixes, frosting, pickles, ketchup, mustard, canned veggies or fruit, or anything you choose. The container is in the Narthex, so you can place your items in the container or in Classroom B downstairs. It is important that you not bring any perishable food and check the dates on each item, so that it is not close dated or out of date! Those who are attending our meals are very grateful for the tables full of food items ready to take with them each month!

We again had the opportunity to take part in the **Giving Tree** project. The tags were taken off the tree and gifts returned to the office in record time. Karen Thomsen was in charge of organizing and taking those to the Careage Hills Care Center in time for them to open them at their Christmas Party. Thanks so much for doing that, Karen! What a wonderful way for us to brighten the lives of others during the Christmas season!

Our **January Welcome Plate Meal** will be held on **Saturday, January 31st from Noon- 1:00 pm.** We will be serving scalloped potatoes and ham as our main entree'. We urge you to invite your friends and neighbors to attend. Come and join us in welcoming our guests and showing them that God loves them and so do we! Invite them to come to church. We are so blessed, so let's be a blessing to them!

If you'd like to join our committee, we meet on the **first Thursday of each month at 3:00 pm** in the Library. We'd love to have additional members who would like to become involved in the events that we plan each month.



January Volunteers & Sponsors

Sunday Lectors:

Jan 4: Todd Anderson
Jan 11:
Jan 18:
Jan 25:

Saturday Lectors:

Jan 10:
Jan 17:
Jan 24:
Jan 31:

Altar Flowers:

Jan 4:
Jan 11: Bill & Mary Larson
Jan 18:
Jan 25:

Bethlehem On the Air:

Jan 4:
Jan 11: Terry & Donna Janssen
Jan 18:
Jan 25:

Mission Support:

Jan 4:
Jan 11:
Jan 18:
Jan 25:

World Hunger:

Jan 4:
Jan 11:
Jan 18:
Jan 25:

Pulpit Supply:

Jan 3/4: Deb Mechler
Jan 10/11: Sarah Morphew
Jan 17/18: Jim Mohn
Jan 24/25: Don Tisthammer
Jan 31/Feb 1: Deb Mechler



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:17

January 2026 MEETING DATES:

Executive Board Meeting- January 4- After the church service in the library.

Lydia- January 13 at 4:00 with Lynette Hyndman

Anna- January 14 at 9:00 with Lynde Lundquist

Vashti/Esther- January 14 at 1:30 with Patty Anderson

All are welcome at our group meetings. We'd love to have more fellow Christians participate.

Quilting- January 21, 2026 9:00, Church Basement- We have lots of fabric that has been donated. Please let us know if you'd like to sew quilt tops or bottoms for us. Thanks to all who have done this for years.

Personal/Health Kits - Please help us make some personal/health kits. Bath towel- dark in color and 2 bath size bars of soap, fingernail clippers, comb, and a toothbrush. Thanks to Jim Mohn's Christ Care group for putting together many kits.

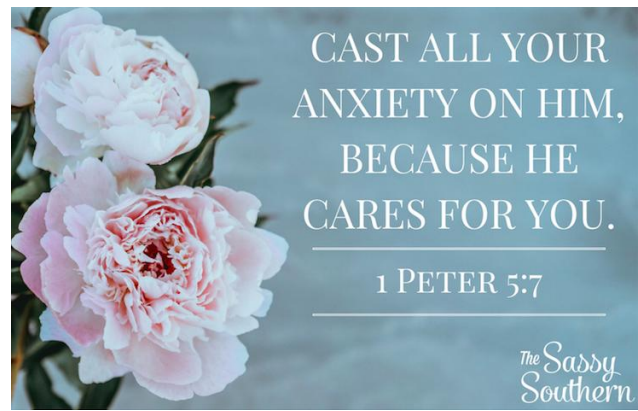
School Kits- Backpack, notebooks, ruler, eraser, unsharpened, pencils, pens, scissors, crayons, pencil sharpener

Baby Kits- Socks, gowns, sweater or jacket, cloth diapers, diaper pins, receiving blankets, towels, T-shirts, soap. Watch for sales! Thanks to Lori Thomas for putting together many kits!

Thanks to all who helped at the Welcome Plate in December. If you'd like to help in the kitchen in January, please contact Pat Friedrichsen. We are all God's Hands and Feet! Let's help our neighbors in need. If you'd like to help in the Caring Clothing Closet, please contact Lynette Hyndman. We will take excess clothing to New To You in January.

Thanks to all who baked and delivered bread to our Special Friends in December! We hope it was a time of fellowship. Thanks to those who delivered Poinsettias, too. I'm sure the visit was the best part of this project.

Invite a Friend- We will be making our new program booklets for 2026. Please ask someone to join our Bible study groups. Spread the Word! All are welcome!



Happy New Year to All at Bethlehem Lutheran Church!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Cherokee, Iowa

MEETING: **Church Council Meeting**
DATE/TIME: **Thursday, Dec 11, 2025**
MEMBERS PRESENT: **Kevin Tapper, Kelley Clausen, Terry Janssen, Simon Fuller, Karen Ferris, Kaleb Sleezer, Mike Niemeier, Bruce Jones, Allen Campbell**
MEMBERS ABSENT: **None**
OTHERS PRESENT: **Jim Mohn**
OTHERS ABSENT: **None**
GUESTS PRESENT:
PRESIDING: **Kevin Tapper**
RECORDING: **Linzi Bierman**

<u>AGENDA</u>	<u>DISCUSSION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Call to Order	Meeting called to order by Chairperson Kevin Tapper at 6:28 pm	
Approve Agenda	Motion to approve agenda by Terry, second by Allen: motion carried	
Devotions	Devotions by Allen based on James 1:5, Seek God's guidance in every decision, set aside preferences and listen to His voice.	Devotions for Jan by Karen .
Secretary's Report Financial Report	Minutes approved electronically Report through 11/30 (91.7% of year) November Operating Revenue: \$28,540.18; Expenses: \$5,839.90; Net: \$22,700.28. Year to Date Operating Revenue: \$185,024.23 (74% of budget); Expenses: \$136,251.36 (54.4% of budget); Net: \$48,772.87. Motion to Approve Financial Report by Allen, Second by Kelley; motion carried. Motion to remove Kelley from church credit card and put Linzi on by Karen, second by Mike; motion carried.	Council members to text approval or email approval to Linzi
<u>Correspondence</u> <u>Old Business</u> <u>New Business</u>	-Received from: Teanne at Autum Park Apartments – thank you for donating to their food pantry for residents; Lakeside Camp-Christmas letter. Kitchen Pew- Request has been made to put the small pew that was by the coatrack by the kitchen back in that spot. Coffee Maker- has overflowed again. Linzi to ask them to fix permanently or replace. Karen will come in to talk to repairman and explain what's happening. Door Access Cards- Motion to approve 2 applications by Karen, second by Allen; motion carried. Budget Proposal for 2026 presented- similar to current year. Motion to approve 2026 proposed budget by Allen, second by Kelley, motion carried.	

	Pastor Cummins- Meet and Greet scheduled for December 21st from 2-4 pm. Linzi will send postcards to congregation members, Kevin will discuss refreshments with Pat F. Discussion of compensation package based on guidelines provided by the Synod. Total package (salary, benefits, and housing) to be presented to the congregation, will have special meeting on January 4th to vote on whether to call Pastor Cummins. Linzi will send postcards. Resignation of Simon Fuller- Motion by Terry to accept Simon's resignation from council and to thank him for all the work he's done. Second by Allen; motion carried.	
<u>Committee Reports</u>	Property – Christian Ed – YouNite participating in Live Nativity on Sunday at 4pm. The last YouNite to take place at Bethlehem will be next Wed (Dec 17) for Christmas party. They will have 2 weeks off and start again in January, meeting at Memorial Presbyterian Church. Evangelism/Social Ministry/Missions – Meeting was moved back a week. Had over 100 workers at Advent Supper, December Welcome Plate on 12/27. Worship & Music – Reviewed plans for Cookie Decorating on Dec 13 from 9-11- Doors open by 8:15 for committee members. Grinch will be present, videos will be played. Discussed advent wreaths and new poinsettias, reviewed Dec services. Leave Christmas decorations up through Jan 4, paraments to be cleaned. Finance – Reviewed financials and created proposed budget to be submitted to Church Council. Gifts & Donations Committee – Stewardship – Spiritual Formation –	
<u>Pulpit Supply</u>	Jan 3/4- Deb Mechler Jan 10/11- Sarah Morphew Jan 17/18- Jim Mohn Jan 24/25- Don Tisthammer Jan 31/Feb 1- Deb Mechler	
<u>Communion Schedule</u>	Christmas Eve- Karen, Mike, Allen Jan 4- Terry, Karen, Kelley, Bruce Jan 10- Kevin	
<u>Adjournment</u>	Motion to adjourn by Allen, second by Bruce; motion carried. Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.	Next meeting Thursday, Jan 15 @ 6:30 pm

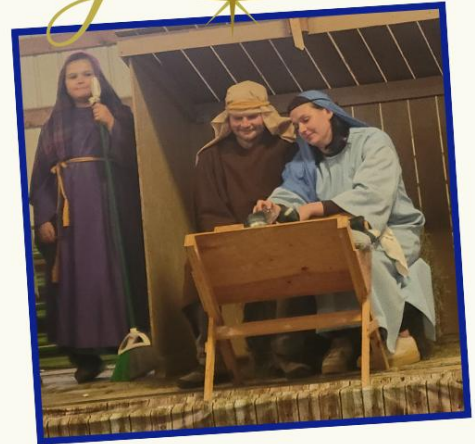
<u>Pulpit Supply</u>	Dec 6/7- Don Tisthammer Dec 13/14- Deb Mechler Dec 20/21- Don Tisthammer Dec 24- Don Tisthammer Dec 27/28- Sarah Morphew	
<u>Communion Schedule</u>	Dec 7- Karen, Simon, Kelley, Kaleb Dec 13- Terry	
<u>Adjournment</u>	Motion to adjourn by Karen, second by Kelley; motion carried. Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.	Next meeting Thursday, Dec 11 @ 6:30 pm

Nelson Family Church Christmas Decorating



The YouNite kids were asked to join with the Memorial Presbyterian Church for their Live Nativity

YouNite *Live Nativity*



Welcome Plate

Free Community Meal



Everyone is welcome!

Saturday, January 31 • 12:00-1:00 pm

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
300 E Bow Drive (lower level)*

*Handicapped Accessibility Available

Food Pantry and Clothing Closet
will be open during this time