

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2026



Birthdays: March 2- Noah Schoen; March 5- Brenda Parker, Levi Sleezer; March 8- Ava Simonsen, Butch Sleezer; March 10- Brandon Beazley, Ryan Husman; March 11- Josie Kindwall, Kevin Tapper; March 12- Nancy Friedrichsen, Leah Kannegieter, Erik Schwanz; March 14- Emelee Cargin, Karen Ferris, Brenda Perrin, Marlys Segar; March 16- Brandon Henke, Kathy Woodall; March 17- JoAnne Tapper; March 19- Jean VanNatta; March 20- Zach Faist; March 22- Audrey Pitts, Meghan Schwanz; March 25- Matt Brodale, Brandon Nelson, Brendan Nelson; March 26- Connie Ladwig, Christine Miller; March 28- Kylie Mongan, Steve Tapper; March 29- Gavin Sleezer; March 30- Mary Larson; March 31- Joe Peterson



Anniversaries: March 7- Kyle & Karla Lundy, Mike & Leah Niemeier; March 18- Erich & Marlin Saeger



Lector Needed for March: Bethlehem is looking for a volunteer to read at the following service in March- ***Sunday, March 29***. If you are interested in reading, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex or contact the office.

Scholarship Applications Available: Scholarship Applications are available in the church office. The deadline to apply for scholarships for the 2026-2025 year is Sunday, March 22nd, 2026.



Directory updates: If you have had a change of address or phone number in the last few years, please contact the office to confirm that Bethlehem has the correct information for the 2026 directory.

Installation for Pastor Cummins: Installation for Pastor Alan Cummins will take place on Sunday, March 15th, with a meal to following in the Fellowship Hall. This is a great opportunity to get to know Pastor Alan and his wife, Renatta. – Kevin Tapper *Please Note, there will NOT be service on Saturday, March 14th.



Lenten Meals: Bethlehem is looking for a committee to provide the Lenten Supper on March 25th. Meals are at 5:30 pm on Wednesday nights, with Lenten Service following at 7:00 pm.



Easter Lily Sign Up Sheets: There is a sign-up sheet for Easter Lilies on the table in the Narthex. There are 27 available at a cost of \$25 each. Please sign up by March 22nd. If ordering more than one lily, please use a separate line for each.



Evangelism In Action

Our February Welcome Plate meal was held on **Saturday, February 28th from Noon-1:00 pm.** Vicky lead devotions at 11:45 am. We served spaghetti, garlic bread, lettuce salad, cupcakes and drinks. Thanks to the many people who helped in the kitchen, donated food, lead devotions, and assisted with the HyVee baked goods, Papa's Pantry, and the Caring Closet! We served 90, including 23 deliveries and 26 carry outs. Our guests were welcomed by our members to a warm meal and a time of fellowship! Pastor Cummins was there to help meet and greet all who were in attendance. It is wonderful to him there and we welcome him to join our outreach to the community! 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!

Currently, we **are not** accepting any clothing donations for the Caring Closet. We need some time to sort through the many items that have been donated. Thanks so much for your patience!

Our **March Welcome Plate Meal** will be held on **Saturday, March 28th from Noon- 1:00 pm.** We will be serving meatloaf and mashed potatoes 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.



March Volunteers & Sponsors

Sunday Lectors:

Mar 1: Todd Anderson
Mar 8: Dave Zelle
Mar 15: Jim Mohn
Mar 22: Leah Niemeier
Mar 29:

Saturday Lectors:

Mar 7: Bill Larson
Mar 14: *No Service*
Mar 21: Harry Bradstreet
Mar 28: Bill Larson

Altar Flowers:

Mar 1: Kevin & JoAnne Tapper
Mar 8: Bob & Karen Ferris
Mar 15: Phyllis Conley
Mar 22: Mark & Marlys Segar
Mar 29: Bill Larson

Bethlehem On the Air:

Mar 1: Kevin & JoAnne Tapper
Mar 8:
Mar 15:
Mar 22:
Mar 29: Matt & Jody Mongan

Mission Support:

Mar 1:
Mar 8: WELCA
Mar 15:
Mar 22:

World Hunger:

Mar 1:
Mar 8: WELCA
Mar 15:
Mar 22:
Mar 29:



Spiritual Formation

Leader: Vicky Brodale

Time: Third Sunday of the Month @ 10:30am

Location: Library

Reading & discussion material: A Tree Full of Angels, Seeing the Holy in the Ordinary by Macrina Wiederkehr

February 15, 2026

Six BLC members present with great discussion.

We are on chapter 3 – ‘Gathering Up the Crumbs’
Moments of beauty are mainly Crumbs.

A quote from page 29:

Moments of beauty! They are everywhere. They are every day. You’ve seen them. You’ve been in the heart of them. Magnificent as they may seem at the time, they are only crumbs, pieces of the whole loaf. Let’s walk back through the pages of our hearts and remember some of these moments:

- . . . snowflakes falling so fast that the sky was suddenly full of angels
- . . . a bud on a Christmas cactus that you thought was dead
- . . . a sunset that is so breathtakingly beautiful you stop the car to just be with it
- . . . an old face aglow because of your unexpected visit

Come and join us, all are welcome.

Next meeting will be changed to March 8th due to the 15th Installation.



March 2026 MEETING DATES:

Executive Board Meeting- March 8- After the church service in the library

Anna Group- March 11, Donna Bofenkamp, 9:30 in the library

Vashti/Esther Group- March 11, Connie Mohn, 1:30 in the library

Lydia Group-March 10, Marlys Segar, 4:00 in the Fellowship Hall

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

Sermons Ala Carte- March 11 the Memorial Presbyterian Church

Quilting- March 18, 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. A special thanks to Sandy Taylor!

Lenten Meals- Volunteers will serve a meal before the Lenten Services in March. Watch for menus and times.

"Gather" Bible Study- Read the devotions and lessons on your own. Gather Magazine has wonderful stories to inspire us and strengthen our faith.

Cookbooks- We are still selling our cookbooks for \$5. This money will go toward our Mission Groups we support all year. Let us know if you'd like one for a gift.

Personal/Health Kits - Please help us make some personal/health kits. Bath towel- dark in color and 2 bath size bars of soap.

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.

Thanks to all who helped at the Welcome Plate in February. If you'd like to help in March, 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 Lynde Lundquist or Marlin Saeger.

Valentines- WELCA sent Valentines and cash gifts to our College Students and Military Personnel. Thanks to all who helped us with this worthwhile project. Your donations are appreciated!

Sermons Ala Carte- Bethlehem Lutheran Church will again be participating in Sermons Ala Carte. Please let someone in WELCA know if you'd like to provide a salad, bars, or help with this project. It is quite meaningful to worship with other denominations or faiths in our community. We also were able to give to many worthwhile causes last year. We gave money to each of the following organizations- Mid Sioux, CAP, Hospice, Trivium, & CAASA. We gave to the Ministerial Association. The meal is \$5. After a noon Sermon all are invited to eat together at the Presbyterian Church in Cherokee. We will be finished by 1:00 so those who are working can get back. The event starts on February 18th and is held every Wednesday during Lent.

Let us pray

We remember that March is Women's History Month.

Thank you for all the cherished women in our lives and in our histories: mothers, sisters, friends and neighbors.

God, may women across the globe continue to be empowered, knowing the love you offer. Amen

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Cherokee, Iowa

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| <u>MEETING:</u> | <u>Church Council Meeting</u> |
| <u>DATE/TIME:</u> | <u>Thursday, February 12, 2026 @ 6:30 pm</u> |
| <u>MEMBERS PRESENT:</u> | <u>Karen Ferris, Allen Campbell, Kaleb Sleezer, Kevin Tapper, Kelley Clausen, Mike Niemeier, Jodi Mongan</u> |
| <u>MEMBERS ABSENT:</u> | <u>none</u> |
| <u>OTHERS PRESENT:</u> | <u>Jim Mohn</u> |
| <u>OTHERS ABSENT:</u> | <u>None</u> |
| <u>GUESTS PRESENT:</u> | <u>None</u> |
| <u>PRESIDING:</u> | <u>Kevin Tapper</u> |
| <u>RECORDING:</u> | <u>Linzi Bierman</u> |

AGENDA

DISCUSSION

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| Call to Order | Meeting called to order by Chairperson Kevin Tapper @ 6:31pm. |
| Approve Reorganizational Meeting Notes | Motion to approve Reorganizational Meeting Notes by Karen, second by Jodi; motion carried |
| Approve Agenda | Motion to approve amended agenda by Kelley, second by Allen; motion carried. |
| Devotions | Devotions by Kelley – Romans 5:3-5; from suffering comes hope, Problems are an opportunity to improve our faith. |
| Secretary's Report | Approved Electronically |
| Financial Report | January operating revenue \$20,233.95. January operating expenses \$17,356.30. Net for January \$2,877.65. CDs mature in March, table discussion of what to do with them until March meeting. Motion to move \$11,516.85 from Capital Improvement Savings to checking account to replenish amount from general fund that was used for doors and windows, and move \$20,000 from checking to savings, and \$15,000 from checking to Capital Improvement by Kelley, second by Allen; motion carried. Motion to approve financial report by Karen, second by Jodi; motion carried. |
| Correspondence | Letter from Chamber of Commerce about 2026 membership. Motion to continue nonprofit membership by Allen, second by Kelley; motion carried |

| <u>AGENDA</u> | <u>DISCUSSION</u> | <u>RESPONSIBILITY</u> |
|---|--|---|
| <p><u>Old Business</u></p> <p><u>New Business</u></p> | <p>-Lent Meals Total of 7 meals, asking committees to provide this year. Worship and Music to provide on Ash Wednesday, Council on Maundy Thursday, WELCA will do a meal, date tbd. Committees needed for other Wednesdays. Karen will check with Jessica if she is interested in doing Easter breakfast.</p> <p>-Key Card Application Motion to approve application by Allen, second by Kelley; Motion carried.</p> <p>-Announcement about Pastor Cummins Kevin will contact radio/newspaper, Linzi will make Facebook Announcement, and Karen and Connie will check with the city about putting something on the sign by subway to announce Pastor Alan’s start date and Installation service.</p> | |
| <p>Committee Reports</p> | <p>Property -Mike/Allen – Issues with elevator on Saturday night, but no issues on Sunday. Pew 11 or 13 on the left side has a broken board, will fix. Allen will talk to Todd about quotes for concrete for back lot.</p> <p>Christian Ed –Karen/Kelley – Will not be having YouNite on Ash Wednesday. 24-26 kids each week. We will share VBS with MPC again this year, June 22-26, 9am-12pm. More helpers are needed, when time gets closer make announcement in bulletin and newsletter.</p> <p>Endowment – Kevin/Kaleb – No report</p> <p>Evangelism/Social Ministry/Missions – Kelley – Welcome Plate served 80 total with 18 carry-outs, 22 deliveries. \$158 in donations. Next Welcome Plate February 28 @ 12 noon serving Spaghetti. Will have free Laundry Day this fall. Next meeting March 5 @ 3:00pm.</p> <p>Worship & Music – Karen/Jodi – Easter Egg Hunt on Sat, April 4 at 1pm. Will need more eggs- 500-600, Denny Allen will provide, Karen will check on bicycles. Worship and Music providing Ash Wednesday meal of pizza, Kevin will order. Service will include ashes and communion. Next meeting will be March 10 at 6:00 pm</p> <p>Finance – Kevin/Kelly – No report</p> <p>Donations/Gifts/Fundraising – Kaleb/Mike No report.</p> <p>Stewardship – No report.</p> <p>Spiritual Formation – Kelley/Jodi meeting March 8 after church</p> <p>WELCA Exec – Sermons Ala Carte on March 11, Trinity Lutheran and United Methodist churches of Aurelia will serve with Bethlehem. Valentine’s cards were sent to college students. Currently not accepting clothing donations.</p> | |
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| <p>Communion Schedule</p> | <p>Wednesday, February 18 –Karen, Kaleb Sunday, March 1 – Allen, Jodi, Karen, Mike Saturday, March 7 - Kevin</p> | |
| <p>Adjournment</p> | <p>Motion to adjourn by Allen, second by Mike; motion carried. Meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer.</p> | <p>Next meeting Thursday, March 12 @ 6:30 pm</p> |

Welcome Plate

Free Community Meal



Saturday, March 28 • 12:00-1:00 pm

Devotions • 11:45 am

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

300 E Bow Drive (lower level)

Everyone is welcome!

Food Pantry and Clothing Closet
will be open during this time

*Please listen to KCHE for cancellation information due to weather