



January at Bethlehem

Day of Remembering

Our strategic planning process continues on **Sunday, January 9, at 10:30 a.m.** in the lower-level dining room.

Pastor Kristen will lead us in a Day of Remembering. We will recall how God has been faithful to us and our Bethlehem ancestors. We need your input whether you have been here weeks or decades. Come and join us!



Giving Thanks for Laurie's Ministry

We will celebrate Laurie Rossow and her ministry on **January 9** as well. Laurie is retiring after leading our music programs since 2009. Come and say thanks **after worship on the 9th**.

Conversation on the Flags in the Sanctuary

The council will convene a conversation on the location of the flags in the sanctuary on **January 23, following worship**. The council appreciates your thoughtful, prayer informed input as we make a decision at our February meeting.

Community and Global Ministry

Bethlehem continues to impact the community for good through your generosity and sharing of your time in volunteer efforts with our mission partners. We continue to serve at Connections Ministry. Those served by the Reach benefit from our support of their meal program. The community comes to Bethlehem on Wednesday night for a free, delicious hot meal provided by Chef Barry and served by you. Neighbors find staples in our Blessings Box. Community and Global Ministry Board has committed to serving Lunch for a Buck at Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry on the first Tuesday of the month from February to May.

Monthly Mission Partners for 2022 (New Partners in bold)

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| January —House of Hope | February —Partners for Housing |
| March —Connections Ministry | April —Global Health Ministries |
| May —Open Door | June —Lutheran World Relief |
| July —YWCA | |
| August —Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry | |
| September —Iambi Secondary School | |
| October —ECHO Food Shelf | |
| November —Doctors Without Borders | |
| December —God's Global Barnyard—ELCA World Hunger | |

Wednesday Night MENU

Free meals are served from 5-6 p.m. on Wednesdays.

January 5:
Pizza party!

January 12:
Lasagna, garlic toast, corn, dessert

January 19:
Pork roast, mashed potatoes, green beans, dessert

January 26:
Taco salad and dessert

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**Celebration Retirement Coffee**  
**January 9 at 10 a.m. in GFJ**  
 Laurie Rossow is retiring after 13 years of leading our music programming. She has been a blessing to the church! Her cheerfulness, kindness, and love for Bethlehem cannot be replaced. We want to celebrate Laurie and all of her accomplishments!  
**JOIN US FOR COFFEE, CAKE, FELLOWSHIP, & WARM WISHES FOR LAURIE!**  
  
**Thanks for the melodies!**  
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ADULT FORUM SCHEDULE

10:15AM, SUNDAYS

- Jan. 2: NO FORUM
- Jan. 9: Day of Remembering (for Strategic Plan) & Retirement Celebration for Laurie Rossow
- Jan. 16: Monthly Mission: House of Hope
- Jan. 23: Congregational Conversation: Flags in the Church
- Jan. 30: Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Sunday: Celebration and Next Steps

Bethlehem's January monthly mission is **House of Hope**, an integrated residential and non-residential treatment service facility for adults for ongoing recovery from substance use and mental health disorders. The House of Hope, Inc. serves 26 county regions using a holistic philosophy and habilitative approach to recovery. They serve men's and women's programs through individual therapy sessions, trauma-based therapy, and medication management. Their goal is to provide client-centered treatment, reduce treatment barriers through scholarship funds, and support recovery through peer support specialists in addition to living skills development.

We hope that Bethlehem members will support this very important service to our community friends who are struggling with mental health and substance use issues during the month of January. Thank you for your generosity and prayers.

December 2021 Disbursements from the Bethlehem Lutheran Endowment Fund

- \$1,000 —YWCA: Girls, Inc.
 - \$1,000 — Salvation Army: Day Shelter
 - \$1,000 — VINE Faith in Action
 - \$1,000 — Mankato Holy Grounds
 - \$2,000 — Crossroads Campus Ministry
 - \$317 — Bethlehem: to cover difference between requested & actual costs of AV upgrade in GJF
 - \$3,000 — Bethlehem: Holiday Needs Fund
 - \$1,000 — Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV)
- Endowment Board members** are Susan Brown, Chuck Piehl, Bob Qualset, Audrey Gatchell, Kristine Rebelein, Mary Bliesmer (Council President-elect), and Pastor Jay Dahlvang.

In the new year, the Adult Education Board will begin offering more Sunday Adult Forums in Grounds for Joy. We will be able to make use of a new cart with audio-visual equipment and a wall-mounted screen to provide an updated setting for both Bethlehem participants and presenters. We encourage you to come for coffee after the Sunday service, chat with friends, and stay for forums at 10:15 a.m. Watch for the schedule of upcoming forums in the Star, in the Monday online weekly newsletter, Facebook, or the screens in the narthex and library. The new equipment was made possible by a generous special grant from the Bethlehem Endowment Board.



Great volunteer opportunity!
Volunteers are needed for the VITA tax program. The program provides free tax preparation for lower-to-middle-income taxpayers, older individuals, and those with disabilities. We need Tax preparers, Greeters, and Phone volunteers. This is a very rewarding activity. Taxpayers are fun to work with and are always very grateful. For more information, call Ginger Klenk at 387-5707.

Here are the "highlights" of the Bethlehem Council meeting held on **December 21**. Meeting minutes with details are posted at www.blcmankato.org and are also available in the church office notebook. Visit with Council members with questions and concerns! We welcome your conversation & feedback!

Financial Report: November 30 balance was a **deficit of -\$12,256** that increased from **-\$9,500** on October 31. General fund giving is at 89% of expected income. Members are encouraged to fulfill 2021 pledges and make other gifts to balance budget by December 31. 2022 stewardship pledges received from 152 members thus far with +\$43,596 over 2021. Follow-up mailing reminder going to unpledged members for financial support of Bethlehem's mission and ministry. We need you to make a difference. **Financial Review**

Committee: Frank Larsen approved for new 3-year term to conduct annual review of BLC financial practices. **God's Global Barnyard Monthly Mission:** \$12,100 received thus far in meeting goal. Donations still encouraged online or in office to make a difference. **Sunday Worship Time Survey:**

80 responses received with support for shifting worship time 30 minutes later to 9:30 a.m. effective Sunday, February 6. Forums & LIGHT to start at 10:45 a.m. **Laurie Rossow**

Celebration: Laurie's 12 years of music leadership & service as Director of Music & Worship and Adult Choir to be recognized at 10 a.m. on Sunday, January 9. Join us! **New Music**

Leadership: Charlie Leftridge approved as new long-term music and choir director effective January 1 after successful interim work since August 1. **New Members Approved:**

Richard & Karen Bouquet returned to area/applied to rejoin BLC. **COVID Update:** Removal of sanctuary pew seating cards completed. Welcome cards for BLC visitors to be updated & reinstated to pew holders. No other changes made in BLC COVID masking & other policies given Omicron virus spread. **Family Faith Formation Director Sabbatical:**

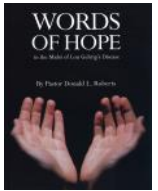
Planning is under way by Personnel Committee for 6-week May/June 2022 sabbatical leave. Application created & to be completed by December 31. Details to be worked out by committee with Anna during January-April 2022. **Strategic Planning Update:** Listening sessions with BLC members held. Key insights and preliminary goals developed for further discussion and decision by Council and congregation. Next event is the Day of Remembering on January 9 at 10:30 a.m. Plan to attend to share your memories and history of Bethlehem. **Call Committee Update:** Ministry Site Profile to be developed starting in January based upon information from strategic planning listening sessions & Day of Remembering. The profile will be sent to synods and candidates as introduction to Bethlehem. Congregation will also be surveyed regarding desired skills and priority areas for next pastor. This will be shared with synod for prospective candidates. **Flags in the Sanctuary:** Moderator still to be secured for congregational forum planned for January 23 at 10:15 a.m. to discuss & discern the issue of display of flags in the sanctuary. Council members making contacts with suggested individuals. **Capital Campaign:** Stewardship Committee charged with reviewing professional capital campaign proposals for mortgage and other projects and make recommendation to Council. **Next Council Meeting:** Tuesday, January 18.

Offering envelopes for 2022 will be available in the narthex starting in mid-December. Numbers will no longer be assigned. Envelopes are dated as usual, but please put your name on your envelope when you make a contribution. Our current contribution system is name driven and does not use envelope numbers. Those who give electronically do not need to take envelopes. Any questions can be addressed to Elizabeth in the church office, or by e-mail at elizruiz@blcmankato.org.



Pastor Don's Devotion

Pastor Don Roberts served as pastor from 1989-1996. He was diagnosed with ALS in 1995, and continues to be an inspiration of life & faith to our congregation.



I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. ~ Psalm 16:8

This is a good text for the new year. Like many Psalms, this is fulfilled in the person of Jesus. How do we keep Jesus before us? We do this by worshipping the risen Christ. We do this by serving the risen Christ. We do this by honoring his commands to love God and love other people.

He is "at our right hand." The risen Christ is wherever we are. It might be a natural disaster. It might be a disease process. The risen Christ is with us, whatever we face. The risen Christ is with us, whatever we go through.

We "will not be moved." We "will not be moved" in 2022. Sometimes our faith is like a roller coaster. Sometimes my faith is like that. We have highs and lows. Remember, at the low points, what Jesus did for us. Jesus died for us. That was his low point. On the third day, he rose again. He promises us a glorious future together with God and one another. We "will not be moved" in 2022. Thanks be to God!



FAMILY FAITH FORMATION UPDATES

Notes from Anna Wencil, Family Faith Formation Director



UPCOMING Sunday Milestone CLASSES

JANUARY 16TH: 3RD & 4TH GRADERS - DEEP BLUE BIBLE

JANUARY 23RD: 1ST & 2ND GRADERS - LORD'S PRAYER

JANUARY 30TH: KINDERGARTENERS - 10 COMMANDMENTS

Join Miss Anna during the LIGHT hour as we explore these important faith topics with a grown-up!

Liturgies for January



January 2—John 1:35-51 ELW 8

January 5—John 1:35-51
Now the Feast and Celebration

January 9—John 2:1-11

Bethlehem Praise Band

January 12—John 2:1-11

Praise with Joe and Missy

January 16—John 2:13-25 ELW 3

January 19—John 2:13-25

Service of the Word

January 23—John 3:1-21 ELW 4

January 26—John 3:1-21

Holden Evening Prayer

January 30—John 4:1-42 ELW 5;

Reconciling in Christ Sunday

Save the Date

MARIO KART LIVE!



Friday, February 18th

BLC Lower Level

FOR ALL 3RD-6TH GRADERS

We will create our own karts and reach each other through the halls through a variety of courses!

FAT TUESDAY

DINNER & ONLINE SILENT AUCTION

Save the Date!

MARCH 1ST, 2022

SEEKING AUCTION ITEMS! BOARDS AND CONGREGATION MEMBERS CAN DROP OFF DONATIONS BY SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH.

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Mankato, MN 56001

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blchurch@blcmankato.org



*A Reconciling in Christ
Congregation*

Pastor Jay Dahlvang: (507) 469-3792
pastorjay@blcmankato.org

Pastor Kristen Venne: (507) 995-2467
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Church Calendar-Winter 2022				
WORSHIP TIMES Sunday, 9:00am Wednesday, 6:15pm <i>Sanctuary & Online</i> ONLINE SERVICE WILL BE STREAMED LIVE ON FACEBOOK & YOUTUBE & PLAYED ON KTOE RADIO AT 11AM.	EDUCATION Sunday, 10:15am • Adult Forum • LIGHT (preK-4th) Wednesday, 7pm • NightLIGHT (preK-4th) • TorchLIGHT (5th-6th) • Confirmation (7th-9th)	BIBLE STUDY Tuesday, 7:30am • Lectionary, online Wednesday, 10:30am • Book of Faith, guided study Facebook Devo w/ Pastors, varies • Online Group	SMALL GROUPS (BOOK CLUBS, MUSIC, SOCIAL GROUPS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES, ETC.) Check full calendar for times/places.	FELLOWSHIP WITH FOOD Sunday, 10:00am • Coffee & treats after worship Wednesday, 5pm • FREE Community Meal until 6:15pm • Give as you're able • Menu on website

All Calendar details can be found on the website at blcmankato.org/calendar.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

*Bethlehem is an inviting community that is growing in Christ,
loving our neighbors, and serving God's world.*

The deadline for submitting newsletter articles is the 15th of each month.

Happy New Year

○ SING UNTO THE LORD
a new song.
FOR HE HATH DONE
marvelous things.
PSALM 98:1, KJV