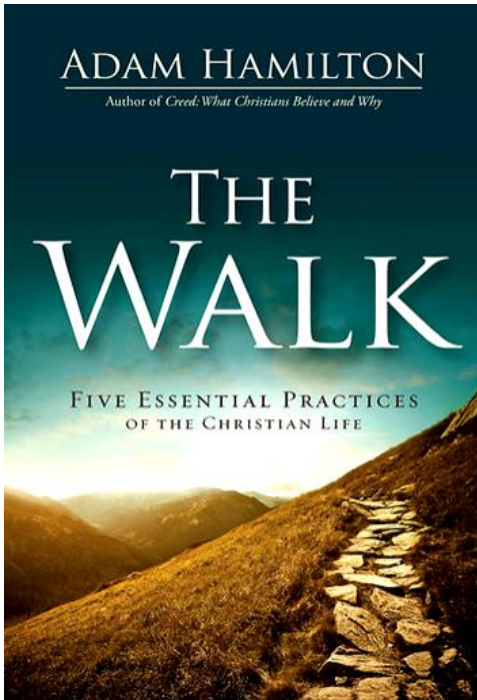




# *The Bethlehem STAR*

## *March 2023*



On our Lenten Wednesdays, we will explore five spiritual practices rooted in Jesus' own walk with his Father.

Based on Adam Hamilton's book, **The Walk**, each week we will explore how we walk with Christ, grow in our love for God, and faithfully serve our neighbor. We welcome area pastors as our guest preachers, and if you want to follow along, the book is available online. We will use Holden Evening Prayer for our liturgy, and before our 6:15 p.m. worship, a delicious dinner is available for you in the lower level dining room.

**Come and join us!**

### **Our schedule:**

**March 1** — A Living Hallelujah: Worship and Prayer, with Pr. Jay

**March 8** — Where Your Treasure Is: Give, with Pr. John Odegard, Grace Lutheran

**March 15** — Listening and Paying Attention: Study, with Pr. Dave Reedstrom, Calvary Lutheran, Rapidan

**March 22** — Here I Am, Lord, Send Me: Serve, with Pr. Jay

**March 29** — Going Fishing, Reflecting Light: Share, with Pr. Jacie



**Wednesday  
Night  
Suppers**



### **Join Us For Wednesday Night Suppers!**

JD Truffles Catering will prepare a variety of delicious weekly meals, and Bethlehem volunteers will greet and serve you. **All are welcome! Join us between 5:00 and 6:15 p.m.**

#### **March 1**

Dave's Delight, salad, roll

#### **March 8**

Turkey noodle casserole, salad, roll

#### **March 15**

Lasagna, salad, roll

#### **March 22**

Swedish meatballs, salad, roll

#### **March 29**

Cheeseburger, chips, cold pasta salad

**Free will donations are welcomed to cover supper expenses.**



### **KNITTERS and CROCHETERS — PRAYER SHAWL MAKERS**

These still winter months are a great time for quiet knitting and crocheting to replenish the supply of BLC prayer shawls. Bundles of soft, new yarn (not Homespun) with patterns/instructions for prayer shawls are available in the office. **BE A PRAYER SHAWL MAKER!** Contact Marcia Nagel (507-420-9692) or Kathy Croswell (507-388-2002) for more information. Knitting and crocheting lessons are available.

**We need radio broadcast  
sponsors for 2023!  
Please call, e-mail, or stop by  
the office to sign up.  
Broadcasts are \$100 each.**





## Monthly Mission



Notes from the Community & Global Missions Board

**ECHO Food Shelf** is Bethlehem's March Monthly Mission. The need for services for local families continues to rise and ECHO expands and provides their services to meet the growing needs of our community. Please consider supporting this important program via a monetary donation. Our March monetary goal is \$3,000. We thank Bethlehem members for your continued commitment to our community and to ECHO Food Shelf.

### ALS Walk

**Saturday, April 29 at Spring Lake Park**

Walk check-in: 8:30 a.m.

Walk start: 10:00 a.m.

There will be more details in the April STAR.



## Adult Forum

**Adult Forum Schedule**  
**10:45 a.m. in Grounds for Joy**

**March 5:** Connections Shelter

**March 12:** Health Care Workers: Challenges & Changes, with Mary Bliesmer & others

**March 19:** Refugee/Asylum Seeker Synod Project, with Kathy Chatelaine (SEMN Synod) & Bethlehem representatives

**March 26:** My Journey on the Appalachian Trail, with Jeannie Phillips



## Council Corner



Highlights from the Monthly Council Mtg.

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

**Financial Report:** Positive January 31 general fund balance of **+\$1,278.10** with member giving at **106%** of budgeted giving. Mortgage balance reduced to **\$860,721.62** as result of an advance payment of \$145,000 made in January from capital campaign donations. Another advance mortgage payment planned in February. Thank you for your generosity!!

**Synod Assembly Delegates:** SE MN Synod Assembly scheduled for Saturday, May 6 at Mayo Clinic Event Center in Mankato. BLC entitled to 3 adult delegates & 1 youth/young adult delegate. Contact **Bob Ihrig** by **March 15** if interested in serving. See the following website <https://semsynod.org/pages/synod-assembly> for details.

**New Members:** The following individuals approved as new BLC members: Char Bezanson and Doug Tschann; Connor and Crystal Johnson and Oliver; Dennis Frank and Kristen Simon-Frank. Welcome to Bethlehem.

**Personnel Committee:** Brad Groth & Lori Ruthenbeck approved to 3-year terms effective June 1. Positive 6-month performance review held with Molly Nelson as BLC Congregational Services Coordinator.

**Financial Review Committee:** 2022 BLC financial review being completed. Standardized report form to be developed for future annual BLC financial reviews.

**Youth Ministry:** March youth gathering scheduled with future youth events to be planned.

**WELCOME:** Plans progressing for housing & financial support for asylum-seeking family from Nicaragua in Mankato. Support has been great from BLC and the other 4 churches. Thank you!

**BLC Council/Boards/Committees:** BLC members encouraged to volunteer to serve on Council & boards/committees effective June 1. Contact **Bob Ihrig** at [robert.ihrig1@gmail.com](mailto:robert.ihrig1@gmail.com) for details.

**April 23 Semi-Annual Meeting:** Plan on attending the semi-annual meeting on **Sunday, April 23** after worship. Adult forum planned one week prior to preview meeting topics. Vote for new Council/board/committee members & hear of 2022-23 activities & accomplishments at Bethlehem.

**Next Council Meeting:** Tuesday, March 21.



## Financial Report



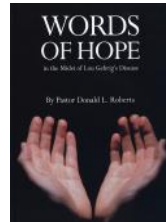
**Elizabeth Ruiz, Financial Secretary**

The new year has begun on a positive note. The general fund balance at the end of January was \$1,278. A principal payment was made on the mortgage of \$145,000 taking our principal balance down to \$860,722. Another large payment is anticipated for February. Expenses are in line except for snow removal. As we all know, this has been an exceptionally bad winter. Thank you for your continued generosity.



Bethlehem offers taxi service for members who are not able to drive themselves to and from church. Rides are available for Sunday worship services only. Please call WS one day before and tell them that it is for Bethlehem Lutheran Church. You will be asked to sign a voucher, and the church will be billed.

## Pastor Don's Devotion



Pastor Don Roberts served as pastor at Bethlehem from 1989-1996. He was diagnosed with ALS/Lou Gehrig's disease in 1995 and continues to be an inspiration of life and faith to our congregation.

### What a Friend!

Jesus is ...

**F**orgiving  
**R**ich in love  
**I**nviting all  
**E**ver faithful  
**N**ear to help  
**D**eighted with us

[Jesus said,] "I have called you friends." John 15:15

*I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ~ John 15:15*

Jesus is not a strict judge. We don't have to fear that we are not acceptable to him. Jesus is our friend. Jesus listens to people. Jesus heals people who ask him. That is a glimpse of eternity where all will be healed. He loved us enough to die for us and to forgive our sins. He told us about the Father. If we want to know what God looks like, look to Jesus.

We should love Jesus and others even if they disagree with us. The author Bob Goff said "If we are thankful, that brings joy and love to ourselves and one another." We are thankful for what Jesus does for us every day. That brings joy to our lives. That brings love for one another. I believe that the best thing we can do to show love to others is to listen. They might not want advice. They may just want us to listen. Jesus is our friend.



## Family Faith Formation Updates

Anna Wencil, Family Faith Formation Director



Lent: Mentors & Palm Sunday Worship

During the season of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd, we take a pause in usual Wednesday education. Our 9th graders create their stoles for Confirmation Sunday. Our 7th & 8th graders are paired with a mentor. And lastly, our 5th & 6th graders prepare to lead worship on Palm Sunday (April 2nd) during Lent.



VBS



RENEW

THE GREEN VBS™

VBS is **July 24-27** in the evening. Our theme is Renew! We will be learning all about God's creation and how to care for our earth. We will invite and welcome the whole community, so invite your friends, too! Registration to come in late spring.

## Current Needs

- NightLIGHT Adult Support! We desperately need more adult support on Wed. nights. Email Kaitlin, [kcarter@blcmankato.org](mailto:kcarter@blcmankato.org), if you can help.
- Fruit snack donations needed to give out during the children's sermon. Drop off during LIGHT/NightLIGHT or in the main office!

## SPRING BREAK!

Due to spring break, there is no education on Wed. March 22nd & Sun., March 26th.

## Stole Workshop

for 9th Graders Confirming Their Faith

On Wednesdays, March 1st & 8th, we will meet in the Dining Room after worship to work on creating stoles for Confirmation Sunday with support from the Youth Board.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
720 South Second Street  
Mankato, MN 56001

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

(507) 388-2925  
blchurch@blcmankato.org



*A Reconciling in Christ  
Congregation*

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

Pastor Jacie Richmond: (612) 581-8855  
pastorjacie@blcmankato.org



@bethlehem.mankato

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## **Church Calendar** **Winter/Spring 2023**



### **Worship**

**Sunday, 9:30 a.m.**  
*in sanctuary & online*  
**Wednesday, 6:15 p.m.**

Our Sunday service is  
streamed live on  
Facebook & YouTube  
and broadcast  
on KTOE Radio  
at 11 a.m.

### **Education**

Please check Family  
Faith Formation on  
our website for details  
about children's/  
youth activities.

See the Adult Forum  
schedule on page 2.

### **Adult Bible Study**

**Tuesday, 7 a.m.**  
**Lectionary online**

**Wednesday at  
10:30 a.m. in  
Grounds for Joy**

### **Small Groups**

Music rehearsals,  
book clubs,  
social groups,  
boards/  
committees, etc.

Please check online  
calendar for times  
& places.

### **Fellowship With Food**

**Sunday, 10:30 a.m.**  
Join us for  
coffee & treats  
in Grounds for Joy  
after worship.

**Wednesday Night  
Suppers** are served  
from 5-6:15 p.m.

**All calendar details can be found on our website at [blcmankato.org/calendar](http://blcmankato.org/calendar).**



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