



Easter

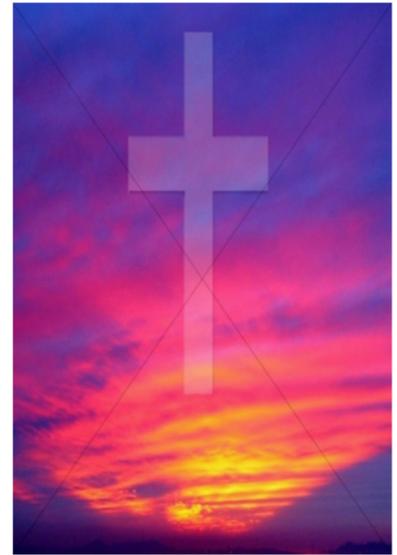
*When our hearts our wintry, grieving, or in pain,
Your touch can call us back to life again,
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;
Love is come again like wheat arising green.
~ Now the Green Blade Rises, ELW 379, Vs. 4*

We might need Easter this year more than ever. On that first day of the new creation, Jesus stepped out of the grave and comforted Mary in her grief, brought peace to the disciples in their fear, and walked to Emmaus with the men in their disappointment. To all of us who do not seek the living among the dead, the risen Christ comes, and with him, forgiveness, life, and salvation. I love brassy hymns, the pastel bonnets and clip-on ties adorning our kids, the flowers decorating the chancel, and a chocolate egg or two. Mostly, I love the opportunity to stand with you to proclaim the good news that Christ is risen!

Come and join us as we start Holy Week on Palm Sunday, April 14. We gather in the narthex and process to the sanctuary for worship, waving palms and singing hosanna. **On Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, we worship at noon and 6 p.m., with the choir leading us on Friday. Easter Sunday is our regular worship times of 8:15 and 10:45.** Make our alleluias strong as we rejoice in Christ's triumph over sin and death! ~ *Pr. Jay*



Bethlehem's Voices in Praise Choir will present "**Lovelight**," a drama written by Janet Litherland, on Good Friday, April 19, at **BOTH** our noon and 6 p.m. worship services. "**Lovelight**" is based on the ancient Tenebrae, a service dating from the 8th century. It commemorates the suffering and death of Christ and represents the darkness that overcame the earth as God's Son was crucified. Come and hear of Jesus' **love** for us and witness Christ, the **light** of the world.



There is a
place for
you at
our table...



Wednesday Night Suppers are served from 4:45-6 p.m.

We welcome anyone who wishes to dine with us. There is no charge for the meals, but a free-will offering will be accepted.

Upcoming Menus

April 3 — BBQ meatballs and a baked potato

April 10 — potato soup and sandwiches

April 17 —
NO SUPPER
(Holy Week)

April 24 —taco salad

May 1 — brats and macaroni & cheese

May 8 — pizza
(this is the final Wednesday night supper until September)

Fellowship News



Council Corner



Here are the “highlights” of the Bethlehem Council meeting held on **March 19**. Meeting minutes with details are posted on the BLC website www.blcmankato.org and are also available in a church office notebook. Visit with Council members with your questions and concerns! We welcome conversation & feedback! We represent you in the decision-making process for Bethlehem!

Treasurer’s Report: February finished with a deficit of **-\$16,238** compared to the January deficit of **-\$14,179**. A number of Sundays experienced lower than average attendance due to weather and likely affected giving by members who do not participate in online giving. Member giving was at 92% of pledges or \$6,225 below what was budgeted at this time. Optimistic that member giving will catch up to pledges in spring.

Family Faith Formation Staffing: Based upon feedback provided by BLC parents, a staffing plan was proposed & approved. The current part-time FFF Assistant position was revised to become the Children’s Ministry Coordinator I while a **new** part-time Children’s Ministry Coordinator II was approved and funded with \$\$ in budget starting June 1. These 2 positions will focus on the children’s program through 6th grade while Anna Wencl will concentrate on youth through grade 12. New position to be posted first for BLC members before external candidates are solicited. Job description & application available in church office. Applications due **April 8**.

April 7 Semi-Annual Meeting: Agenda approved for meeting to take place between services. Annual reports to be presented and Council/board/committee members to be approved. Look for meeting booklet by March 31 for preview at adult forum. Quorum of 75 members is required to conduct official business on April 7. **Come one, come all!**

Stewardship “Dream List”: Discussion identified projects to be considered with future financial gifts to BLC that will advance church mission & ministry.

Legal Checklist for Congregations: ELCA legal checklist reviewed to identify what BLC has in place to meet various legal requirements focusing on governance, taxation, property, insurance, employment, and abuse prevention. Many policies & practices already exist with future work planned to address other areas.

Strategic Goal – Leadership Structure #4: Discussion held on positive progress made on addressing BLC leadership structure and leadership. More to be targeted next year.

Bishop Election: 2 pastors, Derek Brown, Emily Heinis, Bob Ihrig, and Al Girtz to attend area meeting on March 24 (postponed 3 times due to winter weather) in first step of synod bishop election to be held at 5/31-6/01 synod assembly. 11 bishop candidates being considered.

Connections Ministry: Connections shelter ends April 15. End of season celebration to be held this spring. Dream Day for visioning and planning for future to be held on Saturday, May 18.

Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, April 16, 2019.



If anyone would like to send a cheery greeting to **Alice Kollo**s, her address is:

Guardian Angels Care Center
400 Evans Avenue NW – Room 510
Elk River, MN 55330



Endowment Fund Information for 2019

What is the Endowment Fund and how is it used? The **Bethlehem Endowment Fund** is money that has been donated and conservatively invested. As the fund grows, it continues to support needs both inside and outside of Bethlehem using only the interest, as the principal remains untouched. Each spring, students who are continuing their education beyond high school may apply for a scholarship if they qualify by being a member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church and filling out a scholarship application form that **must be turned in to the office by May 1, 2019 – no exceptions**. Application forms are located on the counter outside the office and need to be filled out on both sides. Only one scholarship per applicant will be awarded each year, but students are eligible for five years as long as it is for undergraduate degrees. Students who are applying beyond the first time must attach a copy of their unofficial transcript to be eligible. The Endowment Board will review applications and award scholarships.

It’s time to pick up your scholarship forms as **May 1** is quickly approaching, and that is a firm deadline. Requests received after that deadline will be denied. The application has all the instructions right on it but don’t leave it until the last minute. Be sure to take a ‘scholarship’ form, not the other application form. We will continue with reminders in the upcoming bulletins because we want to be sure that no one misses this opportunity. Some colleges will also grant matching funds – find out if yours does.

If you are hospitalized and want a visit from one of the pastors, please list Lutheran as your tradition and Bethlehem as your church. Because of privacy regulations, Mayo Mankato is changing their policies, making it more difficult to know when church members are hospitalized. The best way to inform us, along with registering, is by calling the church office if possible.



Family Faith Formation Ministry

Anna Wencl, Family Faith Formation Ministry Director ~ annawencl@hickorytech.net



FFF Listening Sessions Update

A big thank you to the many families who showed up for the Listening Sessions we held over the past two months to talk about what's working and not working in Family Faith Formation ministry. You've helped us all gain a bigger picture of what's most important as we move forward with developing this important ministry. Stay tuned for more developments in the coming weeks and months. Please connect with Sarah, Anna, or Pr. Collette if you have any questions.



March Highlights

← Our Confirmation youth hosted another wonderful Fat Tuesday Dinner. All funds raised support our trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering in 2021.

Our LIGHT kids made newspaper trees grow just like our "mustard seed" faith. →



Please Return: Lent in a Bag

As you finish up the challenges this month, please return the bags to Anna or Sarah for a treat so we can re-use them in the future.

Facebook Live Lenten Devotions



Join us for a short video devotion and intro to our weekly Lenten theme each Tuesday at 7 p.m. on our Facebook page.

Spring Fever Retreat: Friday-Sunday, April 5-7

We are headed to **Green Lake Bible Camp** for the weekend with other 2nd-6th graders. For those who registered, look for an e-mail from Anna with details about transportation and packing in the week before. This retreat is likely filled by the time you read, but check with Anna if you're interested in going!

Palm Sunday Family Events: Sunday, April 14

Instead of LIGHT, we will host **Passport to Holy Week**, a family-friendly event with stations for you and your family to engage with the Holy Week story. LIGHT kids will be **singing a song** ("Mantos y Palmas") at the beginning of 10:45 a.m. worship. Kids are also invited to lead a **ribbon dance** in worship. Parents should have received an e-mail from Anna with information on practice times, but contact Anna if you need more info.

Teens Encounter Christ (TEC) Weekend: April 11-14

Bethlehem will be hosting TEC once again! Five of our youth and Anna will be a part of the leadership for this quarterly retreat weekend. The retreat is open to any 9th-12th graders and has been transformational for many. Please pray for our youth and welcome the TEC team as they stay with us!
To register for the weekend, visit southerntec.org.



A BIG **thank you** to many (over 24!) of you who donated supplies and gift cards for our **Cupcake Wars** event on February 13! We had a bit of a surprise when we learned that Bluebird Cakery would be closing soon after our event. Know that the gift cards many of you donated were instead used to buy cupcakes to make sure they went to good use. Thank you for generously supporting this fun group youth event!



Family Faith Formation Ministry Update

After two Listening Sessions, much discussion at Youth and Children's Boards and Church Council, and several proposals from staff, we have clearly heard from congregation members that more staff time is needed in order to keep up as much of the current programming as possible. As you have seen in the church bulletin, this new staff position is a complement to Sarah Morgan (whose title has changed now from Faith Formation Assistant to Children's Ministry Coordinator 1), working on our ministry with children from birth to 2nd grade. We are hopeful that God will send us another amazing person for our team, and we ask your prayers over the hiring process.

One of the other things we heard from our Listening Sessions is how deeply families want to be connected to each other, for parents to support each other, and kids to befriend each other. We know that relationships are at the heart of what keeps people active in their church community, and the earlier we can establish these connections between members, the better. Staff and boards are already dreaming about ways to incorporate more relationship building time and activities in our programming, fostering the connection not only of kids to Christ, but to each other. If you have ideas about how we might strengthen this aspect of our work at Bethlehem, please share them with me, Anna, or Sarah.

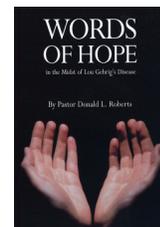
Connections Ministry Update and Prayer Requests

Connections will close its second season on April 15. A season-ending celebration will be held to thank volunteers, so if you helped this season, be looking for your invitation! We are also planning a Dream Day for the future of the shelter, on Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to noon. Church members and community leaders will gather that morning to envision a long-term plan for this ministry and its impact on homelessness in the Mankato Area. We hope to come out of that day with a clear set of next steps for this ecumenical partnership. Anyone who feels a vested interest in the future of Connections Ministry is welcome to attend.

Finally, I ask for your prayers over the weeks before our shelter closes. While there is much to celebrate after another good season, many of our guests still do not have long-term or any housing. They are cobbling together plans for couch-hopping, camping and/or sleeping in their vehicles. Some of them literally need miracles if they are going to have a place to call home. Pray for their mental and spiritual health as they struggle, for openness in our community to more low-income housing, and for their case workers who are moving barriers on their behalf all day every day. ~ *Pr. Collette*

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.



¹⁵He said, 'Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you: 'Do not fear or be dismayed at this great multitude; for the battle is not yours but God's. ¹⁷This battle is not for you to fight; take your position, stand still, and see the victory of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you. ~ 2 Chronicles 20:15, 17

1st and 2nd Chronicles are a history of the Israelite people. In these verses, they were afraid of their enemies. They were overwhelmingly outnumbered. God had some comforting words for them. "This is not your battle. It is God's." We have battles in our lives, too. Sometimes they make us afraid. We fear getting laid off or battling an illness. These are legitimate concerns. God has the same message for us. "This is not your battle. It is God's." Pray about what you should do. God is with us in every battle. One of my fears is that researchers will find a cure for ALS — and I will be too old to enjoy it. But the battle of ALS is not mine. It is God's. God is with me.

Sometimes we face battles in our Christian service. Approximately 23% of Americans do not claim a religious affiliation. This is not our battle — it is God's. Some people fear what the church will look like in 30 years. We are God's servants. Pray about what we can do to make the church better. Remember — it is not our battle, but God's.



April Serving Group



Chair: Carolyn Hovick (388-1389)
Co-Chair: Donna Engles (317-0565)

Wade & Jenny Adams
Leigh Asleson
Bruce & Marilyn Barklow
Linda Bristol
Ellen Delatorre
Sharon Finucane

Tyler Freyberg
Jason & Wendy Keenan
Teresa Mosel
Shane & Rachael Pepper
Joe Rose
Bob & Kelly Salfer

Andrew & Roxanne Skane
Joan Stoffel
Nathan & Gina Wibstad
Clayton & LaVonne Wolf
Ruth Wood



April Monthly Mission Project: **Arusha Lutheran Medical Center in Tanzania**

Arusha Lutheran Medical Center Nursing Scholarships **Supporting Students Pursuing a Nursing Career**

It has been somewhat of a tradition for Bethlehem to support the extraordinary work of Mark and Linda Jacobson at the Arusha Lutheran Medical Center in Tanzania. In April, congregational members will have the privilege of continuing this tradition.

The Community and Global Missions Board, at the urging of the Jacobsons, has made the decision to apply mission project dollars to the Center's nursing scholarship program. Through your generosity, Tanzanians dreaming of a career in nursing will have a much better chance at realizing their goal, thereby helping their people while supporting their families.

Here are the pertinent details:

- Each enrolled student must pay tuition equal to \$1,000.
- There are two course options: the first option is just a year long (tuition expected to be less), and the second is a full three-year program.
- Since opening, the school has had a 100% pass rate on the national exams.
- One hundred and sixteen students have already graduated, and the Jacobsons are expecting to graduate 200 or more students in another five years.
- Graduates are routinely hired at the hospital.

As one can imagine, the need for Tanzanian-based nurses is critical. Please consider your support of this mission.



ALS WALK **SIBLEY PARK SHELTER 3** **April 27 at 10:00 a.m.** **Meeting again at the same** **location as last year!**

I really liked a quote I saw on Facebook: "60 inches of snow in 30 days and 48 hours to get rid of it." The snow is really melting and the water is flowing. The time is getting closer and we are getting more excited to get back out and stretch our legs. The annual ALS walk is happening again. **Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the walk will begin at 10 a.m. at Shelter 3 on the river side of the park.** We're hoping for a great turnout and a warm day. **Please come to the Bethlehem Gait Keepers' table to check in.** If you can't walk with us, please be sure to come and cheer us on. We need your feet to make our voices heard, and we need your cheers to get our feet moving.

If you are unable to walk with us and wish to make a donation, a form and a prepaid envelope will be available in the office. Fill in the form and enclose it in the envelope with your donation. Checks should be made payable to ALS. Drop the envelope in the mail and you will then receive a tax credit statement directly from the ALS Association. Thank you one and all for your support. — Jean Bender



Financial Report



The snow and cold of February made church attendance difficult. The deficit situation, however, was surprisingly stable. The deficit increased to \$16,138, about \$2,000 more than January. Giving has been steady at 92% of budget (budget of \$80,828 vs. giving of \$74,058; \$6,770 below budget). First-quarter contribution reports will be processed in early April. Please review your report carefully. This is an opportunity to review intended giving and catch up if necessary. As always, thank you for your generous support of the mission and ministry of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

~ Elizabeth Ruiz



WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS



| Date | Time | Reader | Usher | Communion Assistants | | | Greeters | Comm. Set-up | Coffee |
|------|-------|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| 4/7 | 8:15 | Holly Meyer | 4 | Mary Jo Hoiberg | Frank Larsen | | Julie Drewitz & Kelsey Eckstein | Al Dykema & Eric Forcier | Tim & Amy Heiser — in the dining room |
| 4/7 | 10:45 | Lori Ruthenbeck | 5 | Cynthia Zacharias | Lori Ruthenbeck | | Jim & Gail Christensen | | |
| 4/14 | 8:15 | | 7 | Dennis Sandersfeld | Karen Sandersfeld | Kelli Woelfel | Bob & Ginger Erlandson | Mary Jo Hoiberg & Sally Burdick | Brad & Betty Groth |
| 4/14 | 10:45 | | 8 | Levi Janssen | Jennifer Nord | Anna Wencil | Tom & Betty Sanger | | |
| 4/21 | 8:15 | Kathy Piehl | 4 | Mary Bliesmer & Chuck Piehl | Etta Poole & Nancy Rorem | Karla Van Lith & Shirley Ruby | Sally Burdick & Lynor Blom | Sandy Abild & Lisa Kohn | Tim & Amy Heiser |
| 4/21 | 10:45 | Maria King | 5 | Lance & Donna Quick | Tammy Dahlvang & Al Dykema | Sandy Kuper & Casey Rose | Jerry & Marge Orness | | |
| 4/28 | 8:15 | Kathryn Hanson | 6 | Brad Groth | Betty Groth | | Jeremy Carter & Cheryl Eigen | Eunice & Florence Sassenberg | Sunshine Kelley & Sue Thul |
| 4/28 | 10:45 | NEED VOLUNTEER | 7 | Anna Wencil | Casey Rose | | Jim & Marcia Nagel | | |

SOUND TECHNICIANS

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|
| <u>April 7</u> | 8:15 a.m. | Randy Wood |
| | 10:45 a.m. | Levi Janssen |
| <u>April 14</u> | 8:15 a.m. | Brad Butler |
| | 10:45 a.m. | Brad Butler |
| <u>April 21</u> | 8:15 a.m. | Randy Wood |
| | 10:45 a.m. | Levi Janssen |
| <u>April 28</u> | 8:15 a.m. | Brad Butler |
| | 10:45 a.m. | Brad Butler |

Usher Teams for
6 p.m. Lenten Services

April 3 — Team 3

April 10 — Team 6

April 18 (Maundy Thursday) — Team 2

April 19 (Good Friday) — Team 3

2019 will be our last Nordic Bazaar, and we need the abilities of a person to help with advertising. We want our last bazaar to go out in grand style! If you can help the Executive Board, we would be so grateful. We really don't have the knowledge or ability to do this. Please contact Ginger Erlandson or Diana Olson as soon as possible, please!!! Thank you!



1919-2019 — A Century of
Norwegian Traditions

The first meeting for our Nordic Bazaar will be held on Wednesday, May 8, at 9:30 a.m. in Grounds for Joy. All chairpeople are to attend; if you are not able to join us, please send someone in your place. All interested people are welcome. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Ginger Erlandson.

This will be our Grand Finale – let's go out in style!!

Divine chocolate!!! Appropriate for the church, right? Most of the Fair Trade chocolate we sell here at Bethlehem is DIVINE chocolate. They value inclusion, fairness, and gender equality, and deeply appreciate your support of their brand as they strive to create spaces for women to succeed both socially and economically. We hope you have a wonderful day, and don't forget to share some Divine chocolate! Look for the cart in the narthex on Sundays and include some Divine chocolate in your Easter basket. Happy Easter — and thank you for supporting Fair Trade.



APRIL 2019



| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| | 1 6:30 pm-Financial Peace University; Bethlehem Brass | 2 7 am-Bible Study 8:30 am-Quilters 1pm-comm. at Old Main 2 pm-Stewardship 5 pm-Evangelism 6 pm-Children's Board 7 pm-C&G Missions, Facilities | 3 10:30 am-Bk of Faith Noon-Worship 1 pm-staff meeting Wed. Eve. Activities (see below) | 4 | 5 Office closes at noon | 6 |
| 7 8:15 & 10:45-Worship 9:30 am -Semi-annual meeting in dining rm 2-5 pm-TEC mtg. | 8 6:30 pm-Bethlehem Brass | 9 7 am-Bible Study 10 am-PUSH in GFJ 10:15-Comm. at Path. 1 pm-Library Comm. 6 pm-Connections Bd. 7 pm-Personnel | 10 10:30 am-Bk of Faith Noon-Worship 1 pm-staff meeting 5 pm-Children's & Youth Boards 6:45-1st Communion class Wed. Eve. Activities | 11 7-9 am-Deva Nation in GFJ 6:30 pm-Life in the Spirit TEC through April 14 | 12 Office closes at noon TEC through April 14 | 13 TEC through April 14 |
| 14 Palm Sunday 8:15 & 10:45-Worship 9:30 am-Education Hour; coffee in GFJ TEC ends | 15 6:30 pm-Bethlehem Brass; Eve Circle | 16 7 am-Bible Study 8:30 am-Quilters 7 pm-Council | 17 9 am-Rachel Circle 9:30 am-Mary Circle 10:30 am-Bk of Faith 1 pm-staff meeting 5:30-Musicians' rehearsal in sanctuary NO Wed. Eve. Activities | 18 Maundy Thursday Noon & 6 pm Worship 3 pm-Book Club | 19 Good Friday Noon & 6 pm Worship Office closes at noon | 20 9 am-Deborah Circle at 101 Main |
| 21 EASTER 8:15 & 10:45-Worship 9:30 am-coffee in GFJ | 22 OFFICE CLOSED | 23 7 am-Bible Study 1 pm-Library Committee | 24 9 am-Sarah Circle 10:30 am-Bk of Faith 1 pm-staff mtg. Wed. Eve. Activities | 25 | 26 Office closes at noon | 27 ALS Walk at Sibley Park |
| 28 8:15 & 10:45-Worship 9:30 am-Education Hour; coffee in GFJ | 29 | 30 7 am-Bible Study | | | | |

Wednesday Evening Schedule During Lent

Wednesday, April 17

NO EVENING ACTIVITIES
except for
Voices in Praise Choir,
Bethlehem Gospbells, and
Bethlehem Brass rehearsal at
5:30 p.m.

- 4:45-6:00 Supper served in the dining room
- 5:00-7:45 Child care available in the nursery
- 5:15-6:00 Junior Gospbells rehearsal
- 5:00-6:00 Voices in Praise (VIP) Choir rehearsal (5:30-6:30 on 4/24)
- 6:00-6:45 **Worship service in the sanctuary (no worship on April 17)**
- 6:45-7:45 Bethlehem Gospbells rehearsal
- 6:45 Confirmation mentors; High School Youth Group; parenting class

Adult Forums — 9:30-10:30 a.m.

April 7 - **SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING IN THE DINING ROOM**

April 14 - Palm Sunday - NO FORUM

April 21 - Easter Sunday - NO FORUM

April 28 - Mankato Boys'/Girls' Club, with Erin Simmons in the Heritage Room



Adult Education



"No, Peter Cottontail was not an apostle!"

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
720 South Second Street
Mankato, MN 56001

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

(507) 388-2925
blchurch@hickorytech.net

Pastor Jay Dahlvang: 507-469-3792
pastorjay@hickorytech.net

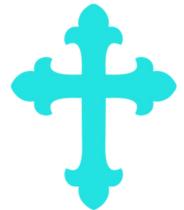
Pastor Collette Broady Grund 507-380-3049
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www.BLCMankato.org



Sunday Worship: 8:15 & 10:45 a.m.

Wednesday Lenten worship: Noon and 6:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday services (April 18 and 19) at noon and 6 p.m.

*The 8:15 a.m. Sunday service is broadcast at 11:00 a.m.
on KTOE 1420 AM / KTOE 102.7 FM.*

Visit our website or Facebook page and listen to Sunday services online!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

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

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING: SUNDAY, APRIL 7, AT 9:30 IN THE DINING ROOM

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

