

The Bethlehem STAR

August 2022

An Update for August

Calling an Associate Pastor

The call committee is preparing a second interview tomorrow (as I write), and we will be discerning and praying with the candidate to discover whether God is calling them to be our new Associate Pastor. If that is the case, we will move fairly quickly. If the call committee recommends the candidate, the council will be asked to schedule a congregational meeting for a vote on the candidate. Two-thirds of those present at the congregational meeting must vote to extend a call. The candidate has thirty days to decide, and if they affirm the call, we have a new pastor! If the candidate or committee doesn't think this is the right call, we will receive a new pool of candidates from the Office of the Bishop. Since Pastor Kristen has completed her transitional call, we will explore possibilities for additional support in the interim.

Your prayers matter in the call process and in everything God is calling us to do. Thank you for your faithful support.

Capital Campaign

There is real energy and excitement among our leadership team as we prepare for this fall's capital campaign. Thanks to Carrol Meyers-Dobler, our General Chair; Amy Haigh, Hospitality; Heather Hammond, Response; Bob Ihrig, Information; and Marcia Nagel, Inspiration. These faithful leaders are putting together their teams — I hope you will say "yes" to their invitation.

We are hopeful for Bethlehem's future because of our faithful God and your generous spirit. We have already begun to dream of a future without the mortgage debt and the new opportunities our God will put before us. We can do this! And each one of us has gifts that are valued and shared to bring forth God's kingdom. Look for lots more to come!



We need radio broadcast sponsors for several Sundays in **August through December**. These broadcasts are important to our members who are not able to attend worship in person. If you would like to sponsor a broadcast in honor of or in memory of someone, please contact the office.

Thank you!



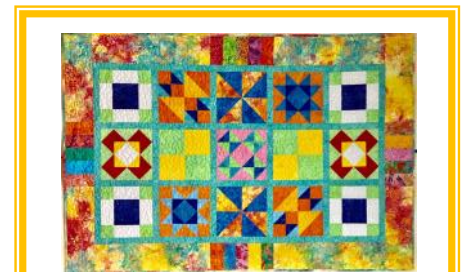
Welcome to Molly Nelson, Our New Congregational Coordinator!

We are delighted to add **Molly Nelson** to our Bethlehem staff! Molly grew up at Bethlehem, graduated with her undergraduate degree from Gustavus, and received an MFA from Hamline. She has experience as a writer and marketer for non-profits. Please welcome Molly the next time you stop in the office, or see her on Sunday morning. ~ *Pr. Jay*



From the Call Committee

We are working diligently through the call process. As we continue the interviewing phase for our next Associate Pastor, we are taking great care to act on the needs and desires of the congregation. Once we identify a candidate that is a good fit for our congregation and its ministry focus, the church council will announce a special meeting for Bethlehem members to vote on calling that candidate. Please pray for our committee members and whomever our next Associate Pastor might be.



The quilting group recently sent 57 quilts with Werner Fick to Lutheran World Relief. We also sent 42 to a reservation in North Dakota, and 21 to victims of a tornado in Kentucky.

We are taking a break until the first Tuesday in September. We are talking about changing the name of our group to "Talk and Tie," which may be more fitting. Please come join us in September!



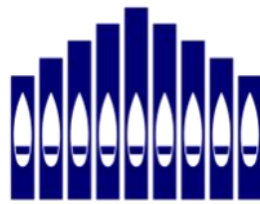
Monthly Mission



Notes from the Community & Global Missions Board

Our August mission is **Crossroads Campus Ministry**, a Reconciling in Christ fellowship, located on the Minnesota State University-Mankato campus. In addition to supporting students in their spiritual journey, Crossroads also provides access to food through Campus Cupboard and the "Lunch for a Buck" program every Tuesday during the school year. Bethlehem Lutheran Church has committed to serving the "Lunch for a Buck" on the first Tuesday of every month starting in September. We welcome groups and/or individual volunteers to help support this lunch – please contact Sandy Abild at (507) 382-6867 if you are interested. In addition, we welcome your generous monetary support to the overall mission of providing a safe and welcoming place for students. Our August monetary goal for this important mission is \$3,000. *Thank you!*

The final three summer organ recitals, sponsored by the Sioux Trails Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, will take place at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Join us at 12:10 p.m. on the dates below for some beautiful music!



SIoux TRAILS
CHAPTER
American Guild of Organists

July 26 – Craig Hirschmann
August 2 – Kraig Windschitl
August 9 – Christine Schulz



2022 ALS WALK to honor Pastor Don and in memory of Jon Nelson

Finally... after 3 cancellations, the walk is going to happen! Please join the Bethlehem Gaitkeepers on **SATURDAY— SEPTEMBER 17**

Location: Spring Lake Park, Shelter #1
650 Webster Avenue, North Mankato
CHECK IN TIME: 8:30 a.m.

WALK: 10:00 a.m. The walk is 2.5 miles.

Can't make the walk? A donation would be appreciated! A form to do so is available in the church office, or you can make a donation on the day of the walk. We always need a cheering squad and group photo! We are hoping for a great turnout for the walk. If you have any questions, please contact Ginger Erlandson.



Council Corner



Highlights from the Monthly Council Meeting

Here are the "highlights" of the Bethlehem Council meeting held on **July 19**. Meeting minutes with details will be posted at 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: April, May & June reports reviewed. **June 30** balance is **-\$22,041** compared to **-\$4,802.70** on May 31. Member giving was only 90% of monthly budget. Members are encouraged to review their 6-month giving statements and "catch up" as needed.

Strategic Planning: 5 goals & supporting objectives have been finalized for new plan. To be published in the fall for BLC members with implementation to follow.

Call Committee: Of 4 candidates initially interviewed, 2 selected for 2nd interviews. One withdrew with remaining candidate scheduled for church tour, meeting with Pr. Jay and interview with committee on July 20. Stay tuned for more news!

Capital Campaign: Steering committee finalized: Carrol Meyers-Dobler (chair), Marcia Nagel (Inspiration leader), Heather Hammond (Response leader), Amy Haigh (Hospitality leader), Bob Ihrig (Information leader). BLC members identified for recruitment to serve on teams. Team meetings to start on August 3. Campaign theme developed in cooperation with GSB company.

Wednesday Night Suppers: New plan approved for catered meals coordinated by BLC member. Join us in September for first supper provided for community and BLC members!

Lay Staff Performance Reviews: All annual reviews have been completed with positive outcomes. Job descriptions & staff handbooks updated & approved by Personnel Committee for Congregational Services Coordinator, Family Faith Director, Office Assistant & Organist.

Family Faith Formation Sabbatical Report: Personnel Committee & Council reviewed & approved Anna Wencil end-of-sabbatical report. Positive impact and gratefulness acknowledged.

Caring Community: BLC has joined the initiative to promote a caring community in the Mankato-North Mankato area. Check out nicbluecares.com website for more details.

July 31 Celebration: Plans being finalized for July 31 celebration of 25th anniversary of Pr. Jay's ordination. Join us for worship at 9:30 a.m. and reception in dining room at 10:30.

Fall Semi-Annual Meeting: Save the date on Sunday, November 20 for semi-annual meeting.

Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, August 16.



Financial Report

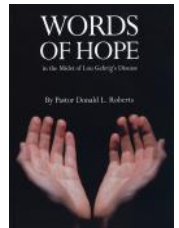


Notes from Elizabeth Ruiz, Financial Secretary

At the end of June, the general fund deficit had grown to \$22,041. For the month of June, general fund giving was \$15,000 below budget. Year-to-date general fund giving was at 90% at the end of June, which was \$26,970 below budget. Expenses have not been out of line with budget, but because of below-budget giving, the deficit has grown. Mid-year contribution reports have been sent by e-mail. Please review all contributions carefully and report any errors to Elizabeth in the church office or by e-mail at elizruiz@blcmankato.org. If you need a printed copy of your report, please contact the church office.

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.



If because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will these who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ~ Romans 5:17

"...One man's trespasses gave death dominion over us..." That man was Adam. Adam means "humankind." We have all sinned, or as the text says, "trespassed." Death has dominion over us. With death, there is no hope. With death, there is no future.

With Jesus Christ, there is hope. With Jesus Christ, there is a future. With Jesus Christ, we are showered with grace. Due to the death and subsequent resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have all our sins forgiven, and a glorious future. Some of us deny our sins. That means death has dominion over us. In baptism, we are given the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit brings us to Jesus Christ. Confess your sins to Jesus and accept his forgiveness.

Life is difficult sometimes. All of us experience difficulty in our lives. As the hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" encourages, "...take it to the Lord in prayer." We have a beautiful life in Jesus, both now and in the future.

AMERICAN RED CROSS



On Tuesday, August 23, Bethlehem will host a Blood Drive for the American Cross from 1-6 p.m. in Grounds for Joy. Donate blood and you'll automatically be entered to Win FREE Gas for a Year! Plus, all donors will receive a **\$10 e-gift card** to the merchant of their choice! Don't miss this chance to save lives!



Family Faith Formation Updates



Anna Wencil, Family Faith Formation Director



FLIGHT NIGHT

AT THE

pool

Geared towards
kids through 6th
grade & their
families



Thursday,
August 11th
6:30-8 pm

Tourtellotte Pool



