



The CHIMES

Monthly Newsletter of
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

A Message from Pastor Jen...

**“What are your hopes and dreams
for Bethlehem Lutheran Church?”**

Greetings in the name of the One who gives us faith and forms us into this community! I have had the honor and pleasure of meeting with many of you individually and in small groups over the past month during “Meet and Greet” times. We’ve met one another at church, in local restaurants, and in your homes so far. It’s been fun getting to know you! I look forward to setting up times to meet with the rest of you, too!

In addition to the usual getting-to-know-you questions I also ask, “What are your hopes and dreams for Bethlehem Lutheran Church?” We’re still early in the collection process, but there are some emerging themes that are exciting to me and provide a framework for us as we move forward together.

A church of compassion.

Every answer so far has included a hope and a dream for BLC to be a community that proclaims and lives in a spirit of compassion.

A safe place for children and families.

Every answer so far has included a hope and a dream for BLC to continue to be a community where parents know their children will be safe and that families of all kinds are welcomed.

A community of caring.

Every answer so far has included a hope and a dream for BLC to express itself in word and deed as a faith community that cares for one another.

A spirit of forgiveness.

Every answer so far has included a hope and a dream for BLC to embody a spirit of forgiveness that looks to the future in faith and love.

As we continue to meet and talk this list may lengthen. As we continue to meet and pray the Holy Spirit will direct us in the way we are called to go. As we continue in faith the love of God in Christ Jesus will form us and reform us as a people called to be Church.

In Jesus’ name,
Amen! Amen! Amen!

Pastor Jen

To schedule a Meet and Greet with Pastor Jen please call the church office. Times can be scheduled individually or in groups of up to 10 people.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

W8267 Hwy 33 East, Portage Wisconsin

Pastor Jen Johnson

608-742-8502 or 608-485-3976
bethlehemELCA.pastor@gmail.com

Mailing Address

The P.O Box is no longer used; please mail to
W8267 Hwy 33 East, Portage WI 53901

Office Contact Info

Phone (608) 742-8502
Email bethluch@frontier.com

www.BethlehemLCportage.org – New Address!

From the Council

Church Council Meeting Minutes:

Please Note: The September council meeting was moved to September 27th, after the Chimes deadline. Please check the November Chimes for the council meeting updates.

Congregational Finance Meeting:

The next Congregational Finance Meeting has been set for **Sunday, October 21st** after worship. Please plan on attending if you are able.

Ecumenical Community Supper for International Day of Peace:

Thank you to everyone that either donated food items or volunteered at the ecumenical community supper on Saturday, September 22nd at Wayne Bartels Middle School.

St. Mary's, Portage United Methodist, Portage Presbyterian and Bethlehem Lutheran hosted this event together for the first time in observance of the International Day of Peace. We had more than enough food, some live entertainment and a few activities for the kids.



Although we didn't have as many people attend as we would have liked, we appreciate the people that did come out for the event and we are blessed to have strengthened our ecumenical relationships. We are looking forward to working together again in celebration of peace in the future!



Fall Ministry Fair:

Thank you to everyone that walked around the fair on Sunday, September 16th. There were many committees and groups that found a new volunteer or two! We are grateful to all of the people at Bethlehem Lutheran that are able to share their time and their talents with us. A few people even walked away with a winning prize: Ginny Sheimo, Jerry Saalsaa and Ann Ciske.

Adopt-a-Bill Program Summary:

Thank you, again, to Bonnie Dixon for bringing forward and spearheading the Adopt-a-Bill program this summer. And thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who participated. Your generous giving over the last few months resulted in a September 3rd tally of \$6,625.24 raised for the program. The investment of your time, talent and treasure in the well-being of our congregation is essential and so very much appreciated.

Tania Anderson- *President*

Tim Kratz- *Vice President*

Angela Chappell- *Secretary*

Ed Rohrbacher, Ann Ciske, Fred Reckling,
Cheri Dvorak, Kathy Tofson, Robin Kvalo



All Committee Night meetings will now be held on the 2nd Monday of each month to better align with Council Meetings. Everyone is welcome to attend and participate!

Technical Help Needed

If you like working with microphones, cords, sound systems and computers...this is your chance. We need someone to set up the sanctuary computer for services and the sound system for choir performances and special music. This is not an every Sunday commitment! If interested, please contact Carla Gerhardt at 608-697-2887. Thanks!

Sermon Broadcasts

Sign-Up sheets are available on the big table in the Narthex. The cost is \$38 and payment is made to the church. Your help in this area is greatly appreciated!

Thank you to this month's sponsors!

10/7

Ron & Judy Donahue

10/14

Dan & Marie Kucksdorf in celebration of their 34th wedding anniversary

10/21

Jim & Kathryn Crawford

10/28

Larry & Sandy Sween



Chancel Flowers

Sign-Up sheets to sponsor the cost of our chancel flowers throughout the year can be found on the big table in the Narthex. The cost is \$28 and you will be billed directly by Edgewater Greenhouse. Thank you for supporting our congregation in this way!

Thank you to this month's sponsors!

10/7

Travis & Cara Druckrey in celebration of their 20th wedding anniversary

10/14

Dan & Marie Kucksdorf in celebration of their 34th wedding anniversary

10/21

Art & Kim Wagner in celebration of their 22nd wedding anniversary

10/28

Deb Brown in memory of
Barnie, Bonnie & Tom Brown

Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour Fellowship is a great time to make new friends, catch up with old friends and enjoy time together here at church.

As our worship schedule has changed to one service at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays, coffee hour will follow.



Please consider joining with some friends or teaming up with another family to host Coffee Hour and share some treats and smiles with the congregation here at Bethlehem. It's really pretty simple and it's a great way to meet people and get to know each other better. If you need more information, just ask one of the staff members or someone else who has hosted before!

The Sign-Up sheet can be found in the Narthex, along with some instructions that may answer any questions you might have.

Thank you to everyone who signed up to host coffee hour for this month!

10/7

Join the Youth Group in welcoming our New Members with a yummy brunch!

10/14

You can still sign up!

10/21

The Wagner Family

10/28

Confirmation Celebration!



Sunday School News

Thank you to all who have signed up for Sunday School and bringing a snack. We do have some children with peanut allergies and gluten intolerance. There are still some openings if you have not signed up. See the sign-up sheet on the Sunday School bulletin board.

In October, we will be learning about Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:4-25), and James and John (Mark 10:33-45).

On October 7th, the children will be singing during 9:00 a.m. worship. We will also start working on songs for the Christmas program.

We are collecting coats, boots, hats, scarves, mittens and snow pants in October. There is a box in the Narthex or they can be dropped off at the Fire Station in Portage.



We also continue to collect pop tops for the Ronald McDonald house and food for the food pantry. The youth are collecting moola tabs and box tops.

Please feel free to talk to any Sunday school staff if you have any questions or you can call Jeanette at 608-617-5228.



Youth Group News

Welcome Brunch!

Join us on *Sunday October 7th* as we welcome our new members into our congregation with a brunch, after 9:00 a.m. worship, hosted by our High School Youth Group.

Culver's Chat!

All High School youth and their friends are invited to join Pastor Jen and Cheri at Portage Culver's for custard and conversation. We will meet the *third Monday* of the month from 7:00 p.m.-8 p.m.

October 20th Bonfire!

All Middle and High School youth are invited to church on Saturday October 20th at 6:30 p.m. for a bonfire, music, games, fellowship and of course, SMORES!

Donuts & Devotions!

Join Cheri in the Youth Room after worship for some seriously good donuts and even better conversation as explore the bible and discuss our faith through devotions. We will meet the *last Sunday* of the month from 10:15-11am

If you have any questions, or would like to help with any of these events, please contact Cheri Dvorak at 608-617-5229 or cheri423@yahoo.com

Keep an eye out for announcements for our 3rd Annual Soup-er Chili Cookoff!!!



This year's Confirmation class will celebrate their faith with the congregation on Reformation Sunday, October 28th.



We would love to include more about you in each issue of the CHIMES newsletter. Maybe you are involved with a group or an event that you want to spread the word about. Or maybe you have written a poem or short story.

Maybe you'd just like to share a fond memory of BLC or something that has happened to you on your faith journey.

Questions, submissions or ideas about CHIMES content can be directed to Lisa at 742-8502 or bethluch@frontier.com.

Thank you to Maddie Cook for this month's submission of her poetry!

God is Crazy

Sometimes, I get sad.
I feel as if no one
knows me. Wants me.
Loves me.

Then I remember,
God does. He knows
my name. My story.
My heart. Woah.

He loves me unconditionally.
He always forgives me.
He understands me.
It's a crazy thing to believe.

But it's crazy true.
He chose me. 7 billion
people, and He chose me.

How could I not love
Him back? How could I
not serve Him as my
thanks? How could you not do the same?

-MC

A Fresh Perspective on Stewardship

How many times have things been going well in an Annual Meeting of the church until it's time to talk budget? The different ministries in the congregation have given reports of what God has been up to through them. Good feelings abound as all reflect on the year and look to the future...that is until the poor treasurer is up to present (insert scary music) the budget.

Some treasurers go the route of doom and gloom for the budget presentation. "Folks, we're in a bad place. We haven't met the budget this year and things don't look good for next year. We're going to have to cut back everywhere this year if we are going to stay open."

Other treasurers take a shot at softening the blow. "I know we've been working really hard as a congregation to fund raise this year, but it just hasn't been enough to get us out of the red. Maybe next year will be better."

You are familiar with the different ways budgets and the whole money thing has been presented. You've been there and will be there now and into the future. This is the congregation you feel good about and feel good in. This is where the Risen Christ meets you each time you come to worship. This is where the Holy Spirit guides you and equips you for serving God by serving God's people. You know this!

I propose we look at church finances in a fresh way. Let's look at a budget in terms of the congregation's mission. What is God calling us to do and who is God calling us to be? If we use "**God's Family, Serving Christ with Love**" as our guide, then budgets become ways of discipleship. Congregational giving now becomes stewardship of gifts that God has given to us. What we give to the church in terms of time, talents, and money is a response to God's goodness and mission-centered living.

More on this as the year rolls on...

In mutual service to God and God's people,

Pastor Jen

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

October 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:30 am 6:30 pm Tai Chi Euchre	2 9:00 am 6:00 pm Quilting Group ZUMBA	3 10:30 am 5:30 pm 6:30 pm Tai Chi Worship Confirmation	4	5 10:30 am Tai Chi	6	
7 8:00 am 9:00 am 10:15 am 10:15 am 10:15 pm Sunday School Teacher's Meeting Worship--SS Kids Sing Blood Pressure Screening Sunday School New Member Welcome Brunch	8 10:30 am 10:30 am 6:30 pm 6:30 pm Tai Chi Tai Chi Euchre All Committee Meeting	9 9:00 am 6:00 pm Quilting Group ZUMBA	10 10:30 am 5:30 pm 6:30 pm Tai Chi Worship Confirmation	11 9:00 am Women's Group	12 10:30 am Tai Chi	13
14 9:00 am 10:15 am Worship Sunday School	15 6:30 pm 6:30 pm Chimes Articles Due Euchre SRA meeting	16 9:00 am 6:00 pm Quilting Group ZUMBA	17 10:30 am 5:30 pm 6:30 pm 8:00 pm Tai Chi Worship Confirmation Craft Fair Set up	18 6:30 pm Craft Fair Set up Council Meeting	19 10:30 am Craft Fair Set up Tai Chi	20 Annual Craft Fair
21 9:00 am 10:00 am 10:15 am Worship Financial Update Sunday School	22 10:30 am 6:30 pm Tai Chi Euchre	23 9:00 am 11:00 pm 6:00 pm Quilting Group Knitting Group Meets at Dorothy Weber's House ZUMBA	24 10:30 am 5:30 pm 6:30 pm Tai Chi Worship Confirmation	25	26 10:30 am Tai Chi	27
28 9:00 am 10:15 am Confirmation Sunday Worship--Confirmation Sunday School	29 10:30 am 6:30 pm Tai Chi Euchre	30 9:00 am 6:00 pm Quilting Group ZUMBA	31 10:30 am 5:30 pm 6:30 pm Tai Chi Worship Confirmation			