



The CHIMES

Monthly Newsletter of
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

A Message from Pastor Jen...

Back in the day when I was in seminary and training for ordained ministry, I had visions of graduating, finding a call, getting ordained, and serving in a church as a settled pastor. This is good, because that's what seminary was all about back then. Our classes were designed to help us grow into faithful pastors to local churches. My first call in 2004 was to a local church, so I came as prepared as a new seminary graduate can be. I quickly learned that my seminary classes didn't so much teach us how to be pastors as they provided us with the tools and skills to find out what we needed to know while we served. Perhaps that's the best kind of learning after all.

Fourteen years post-seminary I'm grateful for what I've learned and how we were taught to keep on learning. This mindset is a must as I now find myself serving the Church in a more specialized ministry. For the two or so years prior to my call to BLC, I served the South-Central Synod ELCA as an Intentional Interim Pastor. I was purposefully called to serve in congregations for a short period of time to equip them to "embrace their new pastor with open arms." It was very different than serving as a settled pastor. I wasn't there to form deep relationships with people. On the other hand, I was there to get to know them well and help the congregation navigate the journey to calling a new pastor. It sounds odd but made sense during it. That was just one thing I had to learn while doing ministry.

Renewal Ministry is a bit of a combination of settled pastor and interim pastor rolled into one. The process is three years, so deeper relationships are formed with parishioners. As with Interim Ministry, there is a set "plan" with Renewal Ministry, too. Our first year together is about relationship with God and one another. Year Two is focused on the discovery and stewardship of gifts in the congregation. The final year is spent discovering ways in which God is calling the congregation to use these gifts in the world. FYI, we're in the first year and will be until August 2019.

One of the challenges with Renewal Ministry is figuring out what it looks like in each setting. First is the role and ministerial duties of the Renewal Pastor. A settled parish pastor does the usual things we think of when we imagine a pastor: praying, preaching, teaching, visiting, marrying, burying, baptizing, confirming, being present in times of trial, studying, being in the office, attending various meetings, and so on. It's a full-time job and then some.

But a Renewal Pastor is first and foremost called to walk with a congregation for three years as it lives through the renewal process. Certainly, along with this comes most of the functions of the settled parish pastor! A Renewal Pastor is engaged in a delicate balance of engaging in the day-to-day ministry in a congregation and carrying out the roadmap of renewal. Like everything else I've encountered in my years of serving God in the Church, it's a balance that can truly only be learned while doing. All this is to say that even though I came in knowing what books and teachers can tell me about Renewal Ministry, the most learning has happened since coming to be with you in person.

An important aspect of Renewal Ministry is something that happens behind the scenes. Each month I meet with five other Renewal Pastors in the Synod. We take turns hosting; my turn is January 31st. During our time together, which can last three hours or more if we're on a roll, we share what's happening in each of our congregations. We support one another collegially, spiritually, and emotionally. We're sounding boards for ideas and great givers of feedback. We share resources that have been helpful to us in our settings. And we pray for one another.

As we continue in this first year I still need to have meet and greet times with many of you. These times together are crucial for your successful renewal, so please schedule a time with me!

With Hope,

Pastor Jen

Amen, amen, amen!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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Pastor's Report:

Pastor presented a request from Vicki Vogts/Saddle Ridge Estates Assoc. to host HOA monthly meetings at the church. Motion made and approved to allow this.

Committee Reports:

Action Items/Noteworthy Decisions:

a. Finance: Because Pr. Jen is currently covered under Brenda's insurance, she will be waiving her health insurance benefits for 2019, to be reevaluated in October 2019. This will save the church \$1600 each month. Motion made and approved. Motion made and approved to use the entire amount of the craft fair proceeds toward the mortgage due to a shortage this month. Motion made and approved to use the Gifts of Bethlehem Concert and Euchre Card Party funds toward the December bills.

b. Personnel: Motion made and approved to dissolve the Personnel Committee and transfer the responsibilities of the committee to the Executive Committee and the Pastor. We have had two volunteers step forward to help complete the duties of the Office Coordinator position for a period of 6-9 months after Lisa resigns in January. A motion was made and approved to suspend the hiring of an Office Coordinator, to be reevaluated in 6-9 months.

c. Christian Education: Youth group Pizza Sale starting January 6th. We will be looking for a volunteer to lead youth group activities as needed. Please talk to Cheri Dvorak if anyone is interested. January 6th is congregational game day. Volunteer background checks are almost up-to-date.

d. Stewardship/Evangelism: Melissa Kirk has requested to host Financial Peace University Classes at Bethlehem Lutheran. This is a 6-8 week series of budgeting classes based upon the Christian views of Dave Ramsey. Motion made and approved to allow Melissa Kirk to host the Financial Peace University classes at BLC at no cost.

e. Property: Policy and Procedures for Church Facility Use will be distributed and reviewed.

f. Local & Global: Nothing to report at this time.

g. Worship & Music: The hearing devices have not been working properly. Tania will follow up with Josh Brandsma and figure out a solution.

From the Council...

We have included a summary of the agenda/minutes from the December church council meeting below. If you would like additional details, please review the posted copy of the meeting minutes which can be found on the council bulletin board in the narthex.



The official minutes from the December council meeting will be approved and then posted in the narthex after the January council meeting. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please reach out to any member of council. Thank you!

Church Council Meeting Minutes: Summary December 20, 2018

In Attendance:

Fred Reckling, Tim Kratz, Ann Ciske, Angie Chappell, Kathy Tofson, Cheri Dvorak, Tania Anderson, Pr. Jen Johnson. Absent with notification: Robin Kvalo, Ed Rohrbacher. Guest: Austin Kjorlie

Fire Alarm Procedure is updated and will be posted.

Austin Kjorlie looked at the church computer and recommends purchasing a new one. He will provide us with an estimate of what we need and will present it to council.

Annual Meeting date tentatively set for February 3rd (February 10th is back up date) 2019. To be determined by Pr. Jen/Rev. Steve Kottke's availability. Committee reports for the annual report due by January 4th.

Justice Oh has offered to video/record the worship services and post them online (after editing). Motion made and approved to allow Justice to try this.

Sermon Broadcasts

As we've all noticed, technology is great...when it's working! Unfortunately, the old computer in the Sanctuary is not working, at all, and we've been unable to record services to be played on the radio, along with everything else that computer was used for. As we are not ready to purchase a new computer, we have discontinued our radio broadcast program. It's something we may begin again, but that's another conversation after we've addressed our technology needs. Thank you to everyone who has supported this program over the years! Stay tuned for more updates as we explore next steps.



Chancel Flowers

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!

1/6

Barb Rothwell & Dick Olson in memory of daughter, Jennifer

1/13

Linda Lewis in memory of her husband, Dennis Steinke

The 2019 sign-up sheet to sponsor the cost of our chancel flowers throughout the year can be found in the Narthex.



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.



Thank you to everyone who signed up to host coffee hour in 2018!

The sign-up sheet for 2019 can be found in the Narthex.

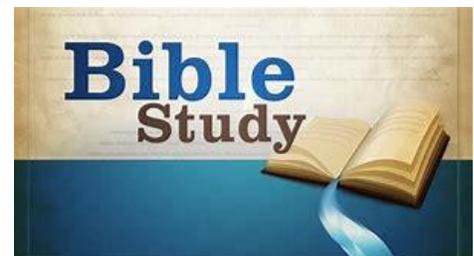


Please Join Us!

Tuesday, January 8, 2019 marks the inaugural Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Jen. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall at 11:00, following quilting.

All are welcome to participate. No previous experience is needed—the Holy Spirit takes care of that!

Bring your Bible, a paper and pen if you wish, and your curiosity. Our times together will last somewhere around an hour.



Sunday School News

This year's Christmas Program, A Lamb's Tale, was performed Wednesday, December 12th, at 5:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 16th at 9:00 a.m. followed by a brunch. We had a good turnout. We would like to thank everyone who helped to make this an awesome program! There are so many people who helped and all of you are truly appreciated, whether you brought food for the brunch or cookies or helped with set up and clean up. It truly took all of us to make this a success.

To start the New Year, on January 6th, following the worship service, we will be having a Game Day and potluck for all ages. Everyone is invited and you are welcome to bring along a favorite game to share. And feel free to invite your friends and family to join us! This is for all ages. We are providing hotdogs and chips; we are asking everyone to bring a food item to share, based on the breakdown of last names below.

In January, the Sunday School students will be studying Jesus' Baptism (Luke 3:15-17, 21-22) and Jesus Goes to Nazareth (Luke 4:14-30).

Happy New Year from your Sunday School staff.



Sunday, January 6th

All are invited to join in the fun and hang out after worship for fun and games, food and fellowship.

Bring the whole family, bring some friends...
and bring your favorite games to share!

Hotdogs, chips and beverages will be provided, please just bring a dish to pass, based on last name:

A-G salad or casserole

H-N desserts

O-Z fruit or veggies

This fun event is for the entire congregation and we encourage everyone to invite a friend or relative to come along for worship and this time of fellowship.

Youth Group News



2nd Annual Pizza Sale!!!

Our High School Youth Group will once again be taking orders for homemade pizzas! Place your order ahead of time (starting soon!) and pick up on Sunday February 3rd! These pizzas will be ready to bake or freeze for another day!

You'll find an order form on the back of this newsletter cover page, but there will also be forms available in the Narthex. We really hope to promote this sale in the community so please grab an extra order form or two and share them with your friends, co-workers, teammates and anyone else you think would love some yummy pizza!

Who likes to have conversations?

Who enjoys spending a little time talking about things that matter most? Who thinks it is important for confirmation students to put their faith into words and action? Why, YOU do! Here's your chance to do all these things at once.

For the remainder of our Confirmation classes, we will all meet together for the Big Picture Lesson and then break off into smaller conversation groups, so we can dig deeper into the topic of the night.



The more conversation partners we have, the better we think this will be.

Talk with Cheri Dvorak or Pastor Jen to find out more!

Mark Your Calendars...and watch for details!

We have tentatively scheduled the Annual Meeting for after worship on Sunday, February 3rd. We hope to have Pastor Jen's Installation the same day! We're still confirming everyone's availability and working out details, so it is possible the date might change.

Sunday, February 10th is the back-up date and we will share the confirmed date as soon as possible.