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The CHIMES

Monthly Newsletter of
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

A Message from Pastor Jen...

Can you believe it? We've been together for one year now, reaching, reuniting, and renewing in the name of Jesus Christ. As we mark this milestone let's take the opportunity to reflect upon renewal in the life and ministry of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

Renewal is NOT:

- easy
- a quick fix
- obvious or straightforward
- a step-by-step plan

Renewal IS:

- like gardening
- an act of faith
- intentional
- a 3-year commitment to be surprised by God!

Renewal Process Overview:

- Year One: Relationship
- Year Two: Stewardship
- Year Three: Mission and Vision

We're closing out year one and entering into the second year of our process. In the past year I feel we've accomplished our goal of coming closer with God and with one another. I'd like to hear from you your reflections on the past year.

Some highlights for me are:

- Over 20 new members

- People staying for fellowship
- Meet and Greet opportunities
- Bible Study and Christian Ed.

As we head into Year Two the Stewardship Committee will be sharing with the congregation a renewed vision. Traditionally stewardship has been viewed as an event that takes place in the Fall of the year, at harvest time. In the past (and in some congregations today) Stewardship Sunday was the day when families gave the first fruits of their harvest to God. Another name for this is Rogation Sunday. We've continued the pattern of our parents in the church by making our pledges of time, talents, and resources to God in our Fall Stewardship Campaigns.

The new vision that the Stewardship Committee will be sharing with you is based upon year-round stewardship and stewardship as an act of faith. In short, stewardship is not just about giving; it's an attitude of gratitude. In the words of Rev. Louise Johnson, President of Wartburg Seminary, "...offer what you have and ask God to bless it...trust God's abundance and provision...keep offering up what we have for the sake of others and let[ting] God work the miracles."

Amen, amen, amen!

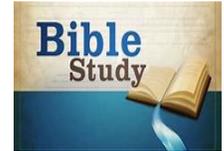
Pastor Jen

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
W8267 Hwy 33 East, Portage WI 53901

Office Contact Info
Phone (608) 742-8502
Email bethluch15@gmail.com
www.BethlehemLCportage.org



Please Join Us!

On Tuesday for the Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Jen. We will meet in the conference room 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.

The Monday M^oring Coffee Clutch

Had a loss, or at a loss?

Stop on in, and stay a while. Share a story, or just sit and listen for a while, and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea. Everyone is welcome.

Located in the Bethlehem Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall. Held every Monday from 9-10:30am.

RIVER HAVEN

Please check the River Haven *Wish List* posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex for a list of items that are needed at the facility. It's a great, inexpensive way to fulfill our outreach programs, by helping those in need with a simple extra item in your shopping cart, that goes a long way to helping those less fortunate.

PORTAGE LIONS CLUB

The Portage Lions Club will be collecting used prescription eyeglasses and sunglasses, in addition to hearing aids for distribution to the needy in underdeveloped countries. Children's glasses are especially in high demand. A collection box is in the Narthax.



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. Unless preempted, coffee hour follows our church service. Gather together after service for treats, coffee, milk or tea and fellowship. *The sign-up sheet can be found in the Narthex.*

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VBS 2019 is almost here! This year's theme is ROAR: Life is Wild-God is Good. It will be held at the Portage United Methodist church Aug. 5th-9th. Even if you haven't signed up just yet, there is still time to register. Forms are available in the Narthax.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

- We're still looking for occasional volunteer **telephone sitters** for the church office on Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 9-noon, when office staff are away from the office visiting shut-ins. If you have some time to volunteer, please call the office at 608-742-8502.
- We also have signup sheets for **coffee hour** and **worship volunteers** that have many blank lines to fill. Please volunteer to help out with these opportunities to make our Bethlehem family come closer together.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



SEEKING RUMMAGE SALE DONATIONS

We are still accepting donations for our church-wide rummage and brat sale on Saturday, August 17th, from 8 am-4pm. We have a couple of storage units near the church that have been donated to us to use for storage. Due to disposal problems, **no TV's, computers, printers, or non-working electrical items will be accepted.**

Please contact the church office if you are unable to drop off your items during regular office hours, (Monday-Thursday 9am-3pm, Friday 9am-1pm), between now and Thursday, August 15, 2019. On August 15,

there will be someone at church to receive items until 6pm.

We will also need volunteers for setting up the sale and cooking/selling brats/food items at the brat sale. If you are interested in helping out that day, please contact the church office at 608-742-8502

ROAD TO RECOVERY

“The American Cancer Society **Road To Recovery** program provides free rides to cancer patients who otherwise would have difficulty getting to their cancer-related appointments. Donate your time and the use of your car by becoming a volunteer driver today. To get started, call 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org/drive.”

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The first day of Sunday school will be Sept. 8th. We are looking for a co-teacher, someone to help with music, and also with the Christmas program. If you are interested in helping us with Sunday school this year please call or see Jeanette Gessner, 608-742-8369, Cell 608-617-5228, email jhgessner@charter.net as soon as possible.

Hope you are having a great summer. We look forward to a great Sunday School year.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Council Meeting Minutes can be found attached to the Council bulletin board in the Narthax or on the church website: blethlehemLCportage.org/



OFFERING ENVELOPES

It's that time of year again when we start placing our order for offering envelopes, and we are going to try to streamline the number of offering envelopes that we order. Skipping non-used numbers is a non-acceptable headache for the printers, and the additional envelopes that are not used cost us quite a bit.

If you are a regular contributor to the church's finance, you don't have to worry, your envelope number(s) will remain the same, if they are in the 100-275 range. Simply Giving members have numbers in the 900's, and those also will remain the same.

For those of you that use Simply giving and occasionally want to make an additional donation to the church, you can use an envelope found in the racks on the back of each pew and write your simply giving number on the envelope to make sure it is record correctly. If you can't remember your envelop number – don't worry, the office has a listing of all the names associated with envelop numbers.

For those of you that are not Simply Giving members and have offering envelop numbers above 299, you will be reassigned a number. If you are a returning member, and have not given to the church in the last year, please check with the church office to find out if your old envelop number has been reassigned.

Snow birds, please consider the Simply Giving solution, as you can change your giving amount to a lesser amount when you are away from home, or leave it the same all year long. We know that when you are away from home, you are probably contributing to another congregation's finances, which is great, as we know that all congregations are facing the same financial struggles.

We depend on all of our active members contributions, which help support our mission and facility, and hope you will understand that we are taking whatever cost cutting measure we can, to maintain the status quo and plan for the future.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Please welcome Josh, Erika, Laila and Scarlet Sween; and Sunny DeMunck, age 1 , as new transfer members into our community, and here at Bethlehem.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

We invite you to Sunday School Rally Day September 8th following the worship service. This is for children 3 years old through 5th grade.

On Rally Day you will meet your new Sunday School Teacher and get reacquainted with your classmates. After the children leave for their classes there will be a short Sunday School orientation session with the parents. Rally Day opening, and the orientation session will be in the church sanctuary.

There will be registration forms in the narthex the first Sunday in September as well as on rally day. Sunday School is held on Sunday's from 10:15-11:15 following worship services at 9:00 a.m.

We are looking for a co-teacher and someone to help with music. If you are interested in helping us with Sunday school this year please call or see Jeanette Gessner, 608-742-8369, Cell 608-617-5228, email jhgessner@charter.net as soon as possible.

Hope you are having a great summer. We look forward to a great Sunday School year.

COMMUNION CARDS

Communion Registration

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
W8267 Hwy 33 East, Portage WI 53901
608-742-8502

Holy Communion is offered to all who are baptized, confess the Church's faith, and who believe that the Body and Blood of Christ is really present with the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins. All wine used is non-alcoholic. Please fill out this card and hand it to the usher.

Name (Confirmed) _____

Name (Un-Confirmed) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Date Communed _____

Please Check

- Member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church
- Desire a Pastoral Contact
- Please note change of address
- Interested in joining Bethlehem Lutheran Church
- Visitor, please fill in home church and address on reverse side. Your information will be forwarded.

Above is a sample of our new communion cards. As we use up our old cards, new cards will take their place. The new cards will have a new blank row to register those who are not confirmed, but attend communion. This will help in differentiating children verses adults that attend communion with their parents or guardians, and make tabulating numbers for our Synod parochial report each year much easier. As we approach the fall with anticipation of hiring a paid secretary for the church, this will also help to make sure that they will be able to accurately enter communion and church attendance. It will also be helpful to remember to only have one household per communion card.



From the Council...

We have included a summary of the agenda/minutes from the July church council meeting below. The official minutes from the July council meeting will be approved and then posted in the narthex after the August 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 July 18, 2019

In Attendance:

Tim Kratz, Ann Ciske (by phone), Tania Anderson, Don Bender, Jack Paulson, Halley Marcks, and Robin Kvalo. *Absent with notification:* Pr. Jen Johnson, Angela Chappell, Kathy Tofson. *Guest:* Jerry Saalsaa, BLC Treasurer

Jerry Saalsaa joined the council meeting to present a letter to council with the results of the 2018 annual audit conducted by Jerry Saalsaa, Angela Pace and Andy Wagner. They did make a few suggestions for us moving forward, as outlined in the letter, and Barb/office staff has already started on the suggested improvements.

We did receive an update from the synod Vice President that Bishop Thomas-Breitfeld was placed on an immediate paid temporary suspension with health concerns being a primary component to that decision. Until her return, Rev. Steve Kottke, formerly the Assistant to the Bishop, will be acting Bishop.

Robin Kvalo and Pr. Jen will be discussing the "butterfly" cycle for the renewal process and a date for unveiling this project soon.

Pastor's Report:

The Chimes article in August will highlight the renewal process

Committee Reports: Action Items/Noteworthy Decisions:

a. Finance: Council approved the presentation for the congregational meeting on Sunday, July 21, as discussed, with a couple of suggestions. Pastor Jen, Jerry Saalsaa, Kathy Tofson and Tania Anderson will present.

b. Stewardship/Evangelism: Committee report submitted; they are working through the details of the Stewardship Campaign that may begin in September, with the congregation's approval.

c. Worship & Music: No updates at this time.

d. Property: Committee report submitted; no further updates.

f. Christian Education: Committee report submitted; We discussed the possibility of creating a release of liability letter on behalf of BLC for the upcoming mission trip, if necessary.

g. Local & Global: Committee report submitted; No updates at this time

Results of the Congregational Meeting in July

We held a meeting on **Sunday, July 21st** to determine how to move forward filling the position of Parish Secretary after Barb Rothwell leaves her role at the end of August. While we are grateful to Barb Rothwell for volunteering her time in the role of Parish Secretary since January of

this year, we needed to discuss a plan to move forward and how to financially support that position in the future. After a presentation by Pr. Jen, Jerry Saalsaa, Kathy Tofson and Tania Anderson, three options were presented to the congregation for voting to be financially supported by a Stewardship Campaign that will begin in September:

1. Create a full-time position for a Parish Secretary; hours may be split with a Youth Activities Coordinator.
2. Create a part-time position for a Parish Secretary
3. Continue to fill the position of Parish Secretary with volunteer staff

The results of the voting are as follows:

19 votes - Option #1; create a full-time position

30 votes - Option #2; create a part-time position

0 votes - Option #3; use volunteer staff

Council & staff will immediately move forward with posting the part-time position in order to screen applicants and set up interviews in August.

Thank you to everyone that attended the congregational meeting! If you have any additional questions, please contact Tania Anderson.



LABYRINTHS

Many of you have asked why we featured a different labyrinth in the bulletin for several weeks. If you have wondered, the placement has served its purpose.

For over 4000 years, the symbol of labyrinths have served as a tool, and as a reminder, to assist in reconnecting us to our inner self, spirit, or God. It is a pathway to obtaining a goal, and the choice of either going

forward, or retracing your steps and going backward. The challenge is the power to endure, to continue going forward, not knowing what challenges you may encounter along the way. Your only decision is to continue on your path, or retrace your steps and never obtain your goal. It has been said that “You enter a maze to lose yourself and enter a labyrinth to find yourself.”. So if you feel lost, just take a walk along the path of any labyrinth and let the holy spirit guide you.

Some members of the congregation have expressed an interest, that they would like to see a labyrinth on our church property, preferably near the prayer garden, which would be open to the public, and also as an addition to both the mission of our renewal and outreach, (additionally it would mean less lawn mowing in the newly improved area).

If you would like to see this addition to the church property, please let a member of the council know that you would like to see this happen, as we already have a promise of mulch for the walking path of a labyrinth.

Adopt-a-Bill. Here's a list of some of our general expenses for you to consider.

Monthly Expenses		
Advanced Disposal	waste disposal	\$ 206.67
Alliant	gas/electric	\$ 526.29
Baraboo Credit Card	credit card	\$ 341.44
Frontier	phone/internet	\$ 304.96
GFC	copier lease	\$ 470.26
Portico	insurance/benefits	\$ 1,183.35
Thrivent	mortgage	\$ 5,983.00
Regular Bills		
1517 Media	Christian education	\$ 57.90
Cavanagh Company	communion supplies	\$ 67.14
JW Pepper	music supplies	\$ 51.99
Paychex	financial process fee	\$ 74.37
Quick books	financial computer program	\$ 35.00
Quill	office supplies	\$ 86.97
The O'Brion Agency	office supplies	\$ 85.00
The TH Stemper	altar supplies	\$ 77.29
United States Postal Service	postage	\$ 100.00
Vanco Payment	simply giving process fees	\$ 25.73
Wisconsin Pest Control	Insect control	\$ 140.00

Church Volunteers

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Reader	Communion Assistants	Altar Guild	Acolytes
Sun 8/4	Gail & Linda Otto	Don & Bonnie Bender	Roger Sheimo	Angela Pace & Linda Lewis	Kari Johnson	Ellison Swenson
Wed 8/7					Cara Druckrey	
Sun 8/11	Angela & Megan Pace	Margaret & Del Molden	John Denhartigh	Bobbie Goodman & John Denhartigh	Brenda Larson	Carly Nyholm
Wed 8/14					Kathy Lawrence	
Sun 8/18	Nancy Buckley	Mike & Robin Kvolo	The Three Wise Men	Nancy Buckley & Barb Rothwell	Cindy Frank	Luke Paulsen
Wed 8/21					Cheryl Hebel	
Sun 8/25	Barb Rothwell & Dick Olson	Larry & Sandy Sween	Carol Pulfus	John & Ellen Denhartigh	Brenda Larson	Chloe Saalsaa
Wed 8/28					Diane Grueneberg	



Looking for volunteers! Contact Nancy Buckley or the Church office to volunteer.

Just a Reminder... If you have an event at church, stop in for a visit, attend a meeting, or whatever and happen to be the last one in the building...BEFORE YOU LEAVE, please make sure all the outside doors are locked. Our church doors have been found unlocked several times in the last few months which creates a great liability for us all. Thank you!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

August 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 10:30 Tai Chi	3
4 9am Worship 10:00 Coffee Hour 10:15am BP check	5 - VBS 9:00am MM Coffee 10:30am Tai Chi 6:30pm Euchre	6 - VBS 11am Bible Study 5:30pm Finance Committee	7 - VBS 10:30am Tai Chi 5:30pm Worship 7:00pm Zumba	8-VBS 5:30pm Renewal Ministry Team mtg	9-VBS 10:30am Tai Chi 2:30pm Bingo at Wycocena	10
11 9am Worship 10:00 Coffee Hour	12 9:00am MM Coffee 10:30am Tai Chi 5:30pm SREA mtg 6:30pm Euchre 6:30pm All Committee mtg	13 11am Bible Study	17 10:30am Tai Chi 5:30pm Worship 7:00pm Zumba	15 Chimes articles due 9am-6:00pm Last day for Rummage Sale drop off 6:30pm Council Mtg	16 9:00 am Rummage Sale set up 10:30am Tai Chi	17 8:00am – 4 pm Rummage Sale
18 9am Worship 10:00 Youth Brunch	19 9:00am MM Coffee 10:30am Tai Chi 6:30pm Euchre 6:30 SRA mtg	20 11am Bible Study	21 10:30am Tai Chi 5:30pm Worship 7:00pm Zumba	22	23 10:30am Tai Chi	24
25 9am Worship 10:00 Coffee Hour 3:00pm Youth – Meat Raffle – Riley’s	26 9:00am MM Coffee 10:30am Tai Chi 6:30pm Euchre	27 11am Bible Study	28 10:30am Tai Chi 5:30pm Worship 7:00pm Zumba	29	30 10:30am Tai Chi	31