

# CHIMES Newsletter

JANUARY 2020 VOLUME 82, ISSUE 1

## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JEN...

My friend, Moses Njobvu lives in Malawi, Africa. He is the founder and director of Abundant Life Ministries Malawi. (You may have seen some posts about Moses and the ministry on my Facebook page and the church's page.) This ministry works with widows, orphans, those who have HIV/AIDS, and others who are in desperate need of help. The work that he and his partners do is couched in the concept of *sustainable community development*, where they assist people in discerning and implementing plans that continue to provide, long after Moses' help is given.

In our conversations via Messenger, Moses tells me that God called him to this ministry. He also tells me that the work they do would be impossible without the presence of Christ in all they do. It is not his ministry and power, but Christ's ministry empowered by the Triune God. He is a humble man of deep, abiding faith. Through him, the people he helps in Malawi and beyond are drinking clean water. They are no longer starving. They are raising their own livestock. They are making and selling goods in their communities. They have life-saving medicine. They have HOPE.

Moses will soon be coming to the United States, to share his story of how God is using him to care for those that are easily forgotten. He will be staying with Brenda and me from April 8<sup>th</sup>-April 15<sup>th</sup>. Moses and I are excited for this opportunity! He will be joining us during a worship service during this time, where he will share with us his story. I'm also helping him find other churches in our area that would welcome him and hear how God is working through him. So exciting!

Of course, this all gets me thinking about how God is active in each of our lives and as a community of faith at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

In our focus on Stewardship in Year Two of the Renewal process, we're turning our attention to our gifts, given to us by God.

My two-fold question for each of us is this:

-What is God giving you as a gift to sow seeds of peace, love, and wholeness?

-What is God giving Bethlehem Lutheran Church as a gift to sow seeds of peace, love, and wholeness?

Notice I'm not asking how we can use these gifts...yet. For now, our task is to identify our gifts. And yes, I do realize this is something you've probably all done before, and you might be sighing right now. Stick with me. We're going places with this, in due time.

Indulge me, your Renewal Pastor, please. Everyone, please answer these questions and contact me with your answers. I want to



## UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 1

NO Worship; Office Closed

JANUARY 4

9am Take down Xmas décor

JANUARY 5

9am New Member Reception  
10:15am Blood Pressure Screening

JANUARY 8

5:30pm New Member Reception

JANUARY 12

8am Sunday School Teacher Mtg  
9am Worship w/ Rev. Baires

JANUARY 13-16

Pr Jen Out of office @ Conference

JANUARY 16

6:30pm Council Meeting

JANUARY 18-25

Youth Mission Trip to Dominican Republic



hear from each of you, from the youngest to the oldest, how you answer these questions. To give you a boost, I will answer first.

*God gives me the gift of compassion, calling me to minister to all and share God's love.*

*God gives us the gift of welcome, where all are seen as beloved in God's eyes.*

Now it's your turn. Email me. Call me. Text me. Leave me a note. Have a conversation with me. Draw me a picture. I want to know your answers, and I want to learn how God is living in you.

Amen, amen, amen!

*Pastor Jen*

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & YOUTH NEWS

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

This year's Christmas Program, New Star, was performed Sunday, December 8th at 9:00 am and Wednesday, December 11th, at 5:30 pm as part of Gifts of Bethlehem. The praise team joined us as well as special music and singing. We have such great talent in our congregation. There were gift baskets to bid on as well as soup and sandwiches. We would like to thank everyone that helped to make this an awesome day. There are so many people that helped and all of you are truly appreciated.

Including everyone who performed, brought food for (Sunday) and cookies (Wed.) and helped with set up and clean up. It truly took all of us to make this a success. We raised just over \$1700 which will go towards helping ELCA ministries and local charities such as River Haven and PACAP

We will start the New Year, on January 5<sup>th</sup> studying Jesus the Word (John 1:10-18, The lamb of God (John 1:29-42).  
Happy New Year from your Sunday school staff.



## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### SNOW REMOVAL

Great job for a teen looking to earn some volunteer hours or a little pay. One of our members is looking for help with shoveling here in Portage. Please call the office if you are interested.

### WORSHIP SLIDES

We are adding "worship slides" to the weekly Worship Team Volunteer list. We are in need of someone to run the slides for each service. This can be done from the comfort of your normal seat in church with a remote control.

### XMAS DÉCOR TAKEDOWN

Looking for help to take down the Christmas decoration Jan. 4 at 9am

## 2020 ALTAR FLOWERS Signup sheet in the Narthex Cost - \$28.00

Celebrating a special occasion?  
Honoring a loved one?



## CONFIRMATION

Thank you to all those who helped spread the joy of Christmas to the residents of Tivoli. Because of your generosity, the Confirmation students were able to present each of the 99 residents with a Christmas gift as well as the gift of music with Christmas carols.

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC MISSION TRIP



The youth and adults going to the Dominican Republic January 18-25 are taking much needed supplies with them. If you would like to help out with their efforts, they are looking for the following items: flip flops, shoes, children's Tylenol/vitamins, eye glasses, school supplies.

Also duffle bags and suitcases you do not want any more to carry the items in. Items can be dropped off in the office or in the suitcase in the Narthex by January 12th.

## OUR CHURCH

### NEW MEMBERS



At this time, we have five new members joining us here at Bethlehem. Please give those new faces a warm welcome when you see them in church. There will be two new member receptions: Sunday, January 5 at 9am and Wednesday, January 8 at 5:30pm. Please join us as we welcome them into our BLC family.

### LISTENING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT BY FELLOW BLC MEMBER, LINDA LEWIS

"I want to share a recent experience I had where the Holy Spirit moved me to act and what the result was. A friend had posted on Facebook that her adult son needed money to pay for a very high vet bill for his dog. He had a good portion of it but a little more than half remained and they wouldn't release her to him until more money was raised. I thought about donating but decided to wait. (Hmm, seems like I may do this sometimes). Some small donations were made but nowhere near what was needed. Here's where I think the Holy Spirit comes in. I kept thinking about it and decided I would call the vet to make a payment. Initially I was going to give what I thought was a nice amount (after all this was a friend's son who I've met a few times) but strangely enough I decided to make a pretty large donation. My friend messaged me quickly after and here's what really touched me. She said her atheist son credited her efforts **AND the grace of God**. Now I know why the Holy Spirit was working in me. The remaining bill got paid, he got to take his dog home and she's doing well.



The Holy Spirit also moved me to tell this story, so I can hopefully encourage others to listen and act when your mind keeps coming back to something you should do. It needn't be only about money, but giving of time and our God-given talents are important. You never know the difference you will make in someone's life."

### CARD CLUB CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

Note from Bob & Cloe Rehdantz: "The Card Club celebrated 10 years playing here at BLC for a total of \$23,324 given to the church. Thank you for allowing 40-60 people to play here every Monday night! You're invited to join us! "

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

### WINTER WEATHER



As winter weather approaches, this is just a reminder that if Pardeeville or Portage schools are closed for the weather concerns, the church will be closed. This means that confirmation, bible study class, and/or Wednesday worship will not be held.

### CHIMES NEWSLETTER SURVEY

Lately, several people have requested to receive this monthly newsletter via email and not in the mail. It was their desire to help the church save on resources.



Before any major changes can be made to how the newsletter is distributed, I first have to find out if there are enough people willing to receive the newsletter only electronically. The reason for this is because we use a bulk mailing permit to mail out the CHIMES, which gives us a special low rate. To receive the special bulk mail pricing, we must mail out a minimum of 200 pieces.

In order to move forward, I need your help and feedback. If you are reading the electronic version of this article, I ask that you fill out a quick 2 question survey which you'll find [here](#). If you are receiving this in the mail, I ask that you call the church office with your feedback to the question:

*Do you want to receive the CHIMES newsletter hardcopy in the mail or electronically via email?*

If you have any questions, please feel free to call the office. I will keep you all posted when I receive the survey results.

### OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2020

Offering envelopes are available to be picked up in the Narthex. Please remember to recycle your old envelopes. This is important, as we will be assigning new envelope numbers next year in **2021**. If you wish to switch to electronic giving using Simply Giving, those forms are in the Narthex.

### CHIMES' NEW LOOK

With a new year and decade starting, the CHIMES has a fresh new look. Same content, just organized a little different. Electronic version has hyperlinks to the website and email addresses for your convenience.

## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES SUMMARY

### FROM THE COUNCIL...

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

**December 19, 2019 - In Attendance:** Ann Ciske, Tania Anderson, Angela Chappell, Jack Paulson, Halley Marcks, Don Bender and Tim Kratz. Guest: Jerry Saalsaa, Treasurer

Jerry Saalsaa joined the council meeting to present the proposed 2020 budget for BLC. We reviewed the 2019 budget versus 2019 actuals. Our expenses in 2019 were more than we anticipated due to reasonable yet unforeseen circumstances having to do with the loan certificates. He will present the budget at the annual meeting and explain any areas of concerns to the congregation, but what was presented to council was very reasonable and we do not have many concerns going into 2020. He based the proposed 2020 budget on the 2019 actuals, with slight adjustments, to be formally approved at the annual meeting on Sunday, February 2nd.

**Pastor's Report:** January 13-15, 2020 is the Faithful Innovation Learning Community Leadership Training event that is led by Luther Seminary that Pr. Jen will be attending. **Action item:** Pr. Jen requested \$200 to be sent to the Synod, on her behalf, as part of Continuing Education. Approved by council.

**Council Nominations:** Council has approved nominations for Geoff Gilbert and Ruth Price; we also retract the nomination for Barb Rothwell.

**Committee Reports:** Action Items/Noteworthy Decisions:

a. Finance: Council approved the proposed 2020 budget that was submitted by Jerry Saalsaa; to be presented for the congregations approval at the Feb. 2nd annual meeting. Council also approved paying the synod the \$687 balance due for benevolence. At the annual meeting earlier this year, the goal of \$1000 was set to send to the synod for benevolence. Council also approved taking \$500 of the proceeds from the Gifts of Bethlehem Program to distribute to River Haven and PACAP (\$250 each).


Jerry Saalsaa also introduced a proposed ADD-PAY program at BLC associated with Pr. Jen's choice to waive health insurance. Because Pr. Jen is not receiving health insurance from BLC, and it is a contractual obligation, the we provide this for her, Jerry proposed that we create an ADD-PAY program that actually pays Pr. Jen a portion of the money that would have been required to cover her health insurance. Council approved the creation of the ADD-PAY program and approved \$5,000 to be distributed to Pr. Jen annually.

- b. Stewardship/Evangelism: No action items.
- c. Worship & Music: No action items.
- d. Property: No action items
- f. Christian Education: No action items




### JOIN US WEEKLY


#### MONDAYS

 9am Monday Mourning Coffee Clutch— Had a loss, or at a loss? Share a story or just sit and listen, and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea. Everyone is welcome. Located Fellowship Hall.

#### TUESDAYS

 11am Bible Study with Pr Jen

#### SUNDAYS

 10am Coffee Hour for fellowship—sign up in Narthex to host

### CONTACT US

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church, ELCA**  
W8267 Hwy 33 E  
Portage, WI 53901  
[www.bethlehemLCportage.com](http://www.bethlehemLCportage.com)

**Pastor Jen Johnson:**  
608-485-3976  
**Email:**  
<mailto:bethlehemELCA.pastor@gmail.com>

**Office:** 608-742-8502  
**Email:** <mailto:bethluch15@gmail.com>

**Office Hours:**  
9am-3pm Monday-Wednesday;  
9am-12 Thursday & Friday

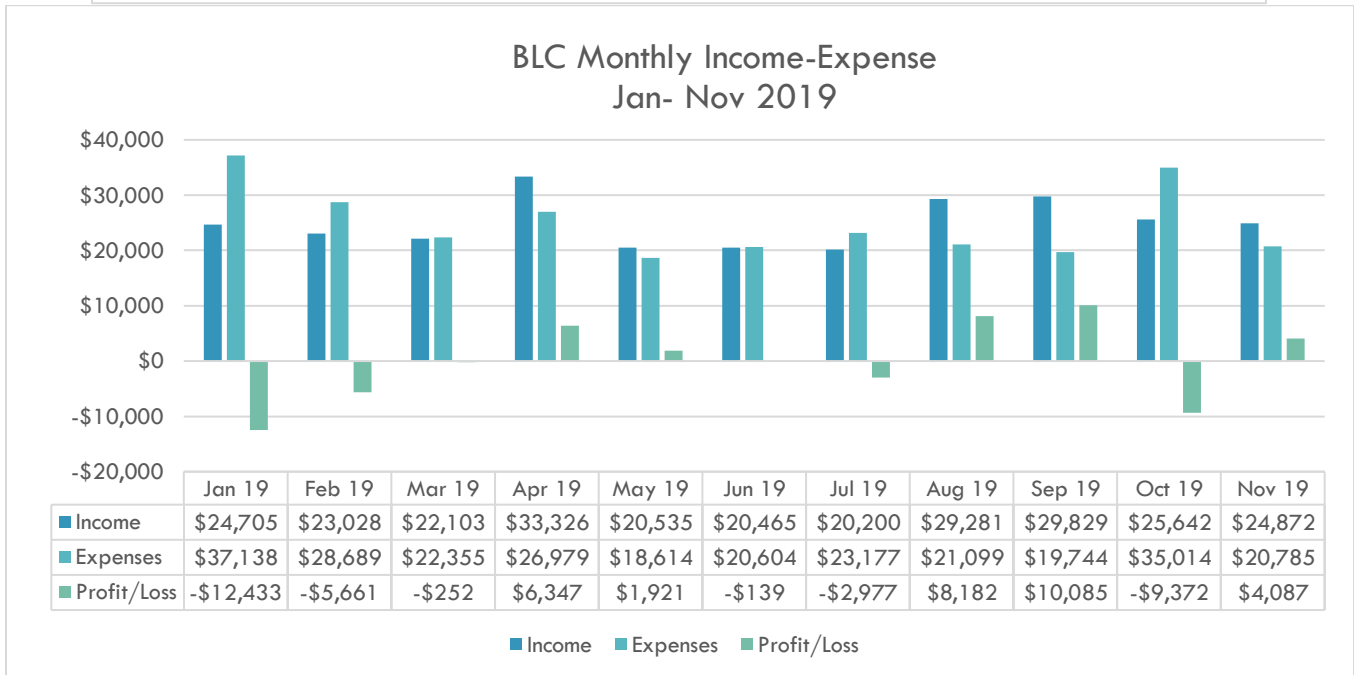
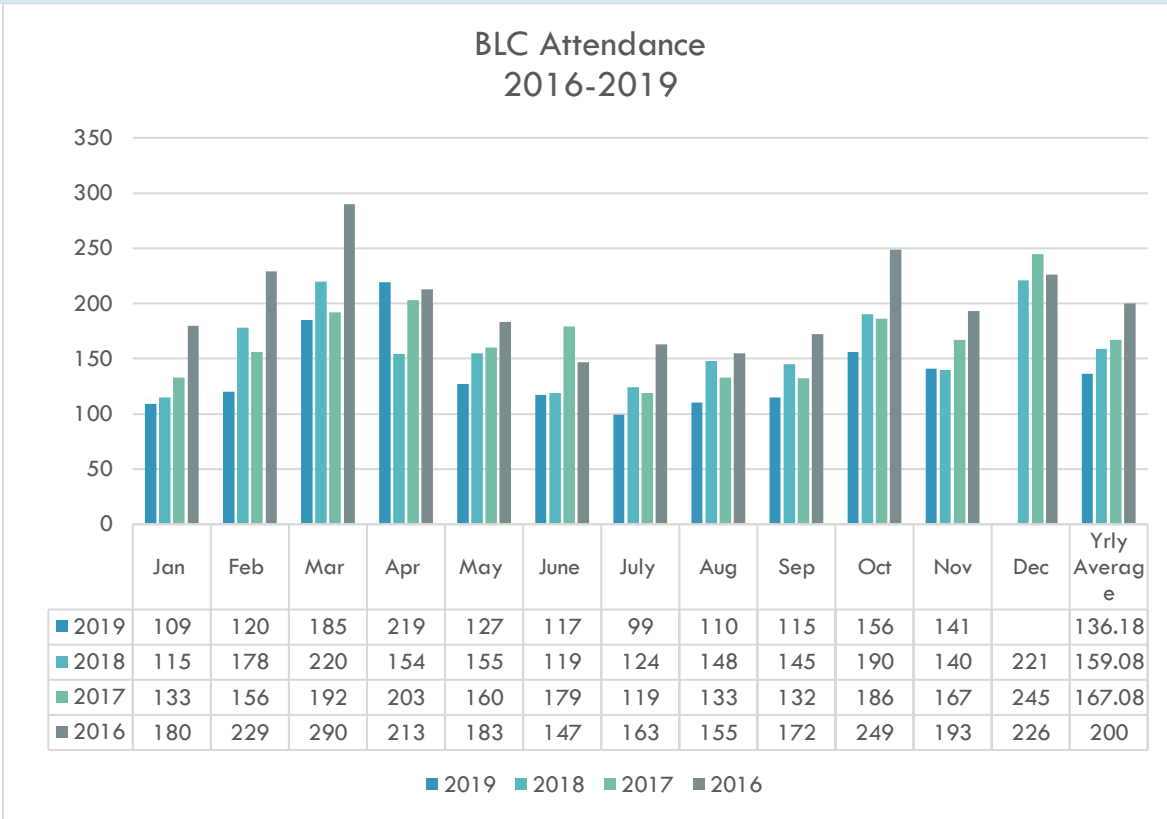


g. Local & Global: No action items




New Business: Julie Saalsaa, Parish Secretary, will be collecting the committee reports and creating the council meeting agenda with Pr. Jen, moving forward. Also, after a group discussion, it was decided to move forward with staff reviews in 2020. We will be creating a review form and discussing this further at the January council meeting.

**ATTENDANCE & FINANCIAL UPDATE**






**JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2019**



# Bethlehem Lutheran Church January 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b> Church Office Closed 5:30 pm NO Worship	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi	<b>4</b> 9am Take down Christmas decor
			<b>5</b> 9:00 am Worship & Reception of New Members 10:00 am Coffee Hour 10:15 am Blood Pressure Screening 10:15 am Sunday School	<b>6</b> 9:00 am Coffee Clutch 10:30 am Tai Chi 6:30 pm Euchre	<b>7</b> 9:00 am Quilters 11:00 am Bible Study w/ Pastor Jen 11:00 am Ginny Paulson Photo group 6:00 pm Finance Committee 6:30 pm Zumba	<b>8</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship & Reception of New Members 6:30 pm Confirmation
<b>12</b> 8:00am SS Teacher Mtg 9:00 am Worship w/ Rev. Baires 10:00 am Coffee Hour 10:15 am Sunday School	<b>13 PrJ Faithful Innovations Summit</b> 9:00 am Coffee Clutch 10:30 am Tai Chi 6:30 pm Euchre	<b>14 PrJ Faithful Innovations Summit</b> 9:00 am Quilters 11:00 am Bible Study w/ Pastor Jen 6:30 pm Zumba	<b>15 PrJ Faithful Innovations Summit</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship 6:30 pm Confirmation	<b>16 PrJ Faithful Innovations Summit</b> <b>Chimes Articles Due</b> 6:30 pm Council Meeting	<b>17</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi	<b>18</b> Youth Mission Trip Leaves Dominican Republic 
<b>19</b> 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Hour 10:15 am Sunday School	<b>20</b> 9:00 am Coffee Clutch 10:30 am Tai Chi 6:30 pm Euchre 6:30 pm SRA meeting	<b>21</b> 9:00 am Quilters 11:00 am Bible Study w/ Pastor Jen 6:30 pm Zumba	<b>22</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship 6:30 pm Confirmation 6:30 pm Renewal Team Meeting with Confirmation Parents	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi	<b>25</b> Youth Mission Trip Returns Dominican Republic 
<b>26</b> 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Hour 10:15 am Sunday School	<b>27</b> 9:00 am Coffee Clutch 10:30 am Tai Chi 6:30 pm Euchre	<b>28</b> 9:00 am Quilters 11:00 am Bible Study w/ Pastor Jen 6:30 pm Zumba	<b>29</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship 6:30 pm Confirmation	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 10:30 am Tai Chi	

## JANUARY 2020 WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Reader	Communion Assistants	Altar Guild	Acolytes	Worship Slides
Wed 1/5	NO WORSHIP SERVICE						
Sun 1/5 9am	Barb Rothwell & Dick Olson	Jim & Kathryn Crawford	Brenda Larson	Brenda Larson & Mark Teslik	Cindy Frank	Justice Oh	Tina Thomas
<b>Flowers:</b> Jerry & Julie Saalsaa, <i>In honor of 18<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary</i>							
Wed 1/8 5:30 pm					Diane Gruenberg	Emily Johnson	Sean Ilkka
Sun 1/12 9 am	Dan & Marie Kucksdorf	Jack & Ginny Paulson	Roger Sheimo	Darlene Anderson-Prest & Angela Pace	Brenda Larson	Josephine Bue	
<b>Flowers:</b> Linda Lewis, <i>In Memory of Dennis Steinke (husband)</i>							
Wed 1/15 5:30 pm					Judy Donahue	Maren Marcks	Halley Harms/Emily Marcks
Sun 1/19 9 am	Julie & Jerry Saalsaa	Margaret & Del Molden	Angela Pace	Bobbie Goodman & Ruth Price	Marie Kucksdorf	Kane Chappell	
<b>Flowers:</b> Bob & Cloe Rehdantz, <i>To the Glory of God</i>							
Wed 1/22 5:30 pm					Kathy Lawrence	Tyler Zabler	
Sun 1/26 9 am	Mike & Robin Kvalo	Larry & Sandy Sween	Darlene Anderson-Prest	Carla Gerherdt & Kathryn Crawford	Bobbie Goodman	Ethan Macomber	
<b>Flowers:</b>							
Wed 1/29 5:30 pm					Cheryl Hebel	Cooper Swenson	



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

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH  
W8267 HWY 33 EAST  
PORTAGE WI 53901

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PORTAGE WI  
PERMIT NO. 117

«Addressee»  
«Street\_Permanent\_Address»  
«City\_Permanent\_Address», «State\_Permanent\_Address» «Zip\_Permanent\_Address»

**See you at Worship!**  
5:30 pm Wednesday Evenings  
9:00 am Sunday Mornings  
All Are Welcome!

**The CHIMES is published monthly by Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

Office phone: 608-742-8502

Pastor: Jen Johnson

Office Email: [bethluch15@gmail.com](mailto:bethluch15@gmail.com)

Website: [bethlehemLCportage.org](http://bethlehemLCportage.org)

**Deadline for copy** is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month prior to publication. Editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.