



CROSSINGS

DECEMBER 2020

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
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has been a lot. Thanks are owed to many members who have helped in many ways.

1. Pastor Carol has been a real trooper through all of this. Besides her regular duties she has kept up to date on the virus, learning about state and synod guidelines and leading the council and others in making safe decisions. Early on she realized that we could not worship in our church and investigated other ways to bring worship to our homes. She had to learn about Zoom and other social media platforms that could be useful. As a result, many of us have learned how to worship on Zoom. No, it is not the best way to worship, but it helps keep us connected to each other and our church. All of you would be so pleased to know how many of us Zoom at 10 a.m. on Sunday morning. She has worked to make worship meaningful and personal. Finally, Pastor Carol led our congregation through the decision to accept the LatinX proposal and the ordination of Pastor Jose on the front lawn of our church.
2. Peg Youngren, too, has spent untold hours planning and searching the internet for appropriate videos to use in worship service and select music for each service. The once a month music and meditation (the first



Dear Bethlehem
Members,

It has been eight long
months since we have
been able to meet

together, visit with one another and worship together in our church. I think the havoc that has been wreaked by the pandemic has been unsettling and downright scary. Even though we were warned what could possibly happen, I could not wrap my head about that possibility. It has happened, it is happening and will continue to devastate us all into the near future. This week we have received good news: a possible effective vaccine is on the horizon. The Lord is never far away and even though it seems that way at times we offer our prayerful thanks for His Mercy.

It is important to "catch the Congregation up" as to what has been happening at Bethlehem and there

Tuesday evening of the month) has provided a healing sanctuary for those who attend. Peg has, as well, worked with the Pastor to use Zoom and its possibilities to its fullest extent. She continues to work to make videos to share with the congregation.

3. Cindy Lange has been diligent in organizing and communicating to keep us on track. Even if she has not been at church, she works from her home with the help of computer magic. My motto is: "Just call Cindy. She will know!"
4. A shout out to the Council for their work to help plan and make decisions that impact us all: should we gather on the front lawn; when is it possible to move worship services inside; how many members can be inside; can we sing. The Council has held many extra meetings to learn recommendations from leaders and then decide what is possible for us. What a congenial and dedicated group they are.
5. Chery Peacock and the Finance committee keep their eyes on our finances. The generosity of our members is wonderful and heartening.
6. The Call Committee who early on kept in touch with our members deserves a cheer as well.

OUR BUILDING

We have made improvements in our church—I must emphasize much need improvements.

1. Railings have been installed to the sanctuary to enable members with mobility issues assistance to get to the communion railing. This was paid for with undesignated Memorial Funds from 2018/2019.

2. The curtain behind the altar was replaced. We believe it was hung in 1986 and by 2020 the curtain was in tatters. It was paid for with Memorial funds from Ida Mockler, Jack Pflederer and the Peacocks 50th anniversary gifts.
3. We purchased and installed a new A/C system paid for with a loan from the endowment fund.
4. The hinges on the windows were repaired so they could be opened to provide adequate ventilation during the pandemic.
5. Barkley Mapes washed the stained-glass window and was available when repairmen came to replace the broken panes. Not enough can be said to thank Barkley for his dedication to tend to its upkeep and care.
6. Thanks to Ralph Mapes who washed all the church windows before the ordination of Pastor Jose. They sparkled.

A final note of thanks to each of our members who have adapted to the new reality and who have prayed for our congregation. You have given us purpose and love. For that we thank you and ask that you continue your prayer and your support.

Blessings to all of you.

Rachel Campbell

OPERATING FUND

Below is the action report of our giving with dollar amounts for October and YTD.

2020	October	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Receipts to Gen. Oper. Fund	\$15,562.92	\$150,923.42	\$167,930.00
Expenses	\$14,437.26	\$153,533.55	\$167,930.00
Total Receipts less Expenses	\$ 1,125.66	(\$2,610.13)	\$ 0.00

As we approach Advent, Christmas and the end of the year, members are encouraged to continue their generous offerings and catch up on pledges. Both income and expenses have been under budget during this unusual year and with special Thanksgiving and Christmas gifts plus our weekly offerings we hope to end the year financially sound and enter our new year with continued generous pledges from our members.

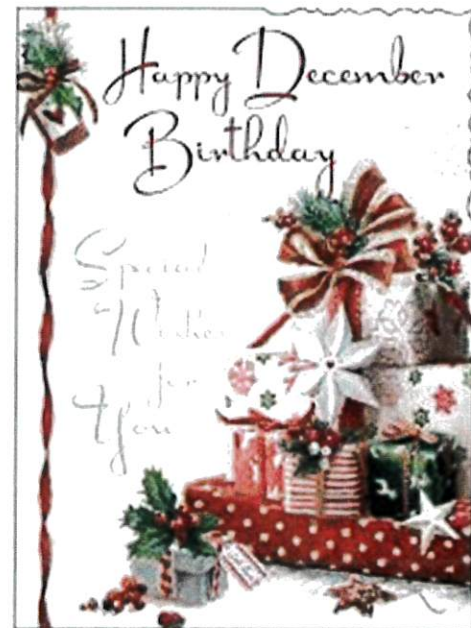
Property Trust Fund

2020	October	YTD
Contributions to Renovation	\$ 377.00	\$ 7,911.00
Contributions to Property Trust	\$ 201.00	\$ 287.00

The current Renovation loan balance which includes the balance on our sanctuary air conditioners is \$68,700. The new ACs have the capability of giving us heat which will warm the sanctuary as we allow fresh outdoor autumn air to circulate and remove any dangerous virus that may be present. Our old ACs could not also heat so the timing of this purchase could not be better. Member gifts to Renovation pay down this loan.

Chery Peacock, Treasurer

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



06	Chris Anderson
08	Zackary Nail
	Larry Rohrsen
09	Violeta Rendon
11	Owen Thomas
	Jennifer Korp
12	Sue Richoz
15	Jenny Kroll
17	Ralph Mapes
23	Bernette Ryza
24	Carl Cruse
26	Lindsey Warren
27	Meredith Wolff
31	Andrea Fiorito

SUMMARY OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

November 9, 2020

Meeting held virtually on Zoom

Margaret Drafall, President	847-695-4721
Karin Jones, Vice President	224-558-9504
Heather Thomas	847-977-1371
Ronnie Malave	847-873-9940
Rachel Campbell	847-695-9024
Jill Olson	847-741-8918

Rachel Campbell 847-695-9024
 Jill Olson 847-741-8918
 Tom Ayres 847-697-1248
 Chris Hunsicker
 Nate Sensor

October 19th & 26th. Tom moved to accept the secretaries report, and Heather seconded. Motion passed

Report of the Pastor:

Our Mission:

Called by Christ to grow in faith, share God's Love and serve people everywhere

Roll Call P=Present AE=Excused
 A=Absent

Rachel Campbell - P Margaret Drafall - P
 Karin Jones - P Ronnie Malave - P
 Nate Sensor - A Tom Ayres - P
 Heather Thomas - P Jill Olson - P
 Chris Hunsicker - P
 Pastor Carol Book - P
 Chery Peacock - P
 Guests present: Pastor Jose as a meet and greet with the current BLC council, Cindy Lange

Call to Order: Rachel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Devotions: Provided by Tom Ayres
Refreshments: NA

The council introduced ourselves to Pastor Jose and told him a little bit about ourselves, and he told us about himself.

Adoption of Agenda: Margaret asked to discuss Service committee info. Tom Moved to adopt the agenda adding the service committee questions to Old Business item #10. Margaret seconded, and the agenda was adopted.

Report of the Treasurer/Finance Team:

See Chery's financial report. Margaret moved to accept the report, and Jill seconded the Motion passed.

Guest Presentation: (if any)

Report of the Secretary: Please see the October 12th Council Meeting Minutes. ALL Meetings were all held virtually on ZOOM—special meetings on

Old Business:

1. Discuss candidates for adding church council members. Rachel asked us all to send her any names and suggestions.
2. 150th Anniversary Planning Committee update: Have not met recently. Possibly getting together in the next couple of weeks.
3. Inactive Member Project ~ Attendance lists are being provided, and we will call and send a note to the members we have not seen in a while. This will not be a year when we remove members.
4. Special council meetings as needed
5. R.I.C. Welcoming process incorporation: Pastor suggested that some opportunities are happening at this time, and she will forward the info that she feels would be a good fit.
6. Child Development Center (opened July 6th) Loan forgiveness application for P.P.P., ongoing. (See new business line item.)
7. Secretary position is still unfilled. Start nomination committee discussions from the council
8. Stewardship Committee: Chris, Carol, and Karin met today and are starting to work on the pledge letter and time/talent inventory. We will work on the brochure similar to what we have used in previous years.
9. Latin-X Ministry Conversation for Host covenant agreement. Pastor Jose started on September 1st. Review the draft covenant. It was tabled for now.
10. Service committee project discussions: Toy Drive is going on now, and there are lists available on the Crisis Center website of what they need. Gayle offered to pick up toys from anyone that would like to donate. Rachel suggested that we try to provide a list to our members as to where the drop off points are located, and they can drop off donations directly at the sites that are collecting. LSSI; it is unknown as to how many residents they currently have and what the need is. Margaret will ask Gayle to put together a note for Happenings asking members to give directly to the agencies in need and providing how members can give to these groups. There is such a significant need at this time,

and it so very challenging to navigate the best way to assist.

New Business:

1. Council version Crossings/ asking assistance with the articles from the council. Rachel will see if Shirley Harnish will put it together as she has done in the past. Karin will write a paragraph about C.D.C. updates; Heather would like to have members provide family updates of a couple of sentences.
2. C.D.C. Financial discussion. The business model is being changed, and they are working on making the C.D.C. financially stable. The C.D.C. Board is working on changes and adjustments to become economically sound. The budget process is underway. The pandemic is incredibly challenging for daycare centers for planning and budgeting.
3. Discuss adding the treasurer's "action report" that will now be included in the bulletin, and it will also be added to the Happenings and Crossings,
4. Discuss members that have not been attending and contacting members that have been inactive during the pandemic. We will start calling and sending notes to folks we haven't been seeing.
5. Evaluate current worship: The Governor lowered the number of people inside for a gathering to ten. How do we accommodate this? Discussed having the folks that are not able to access online worship have priority sign-up? The pastor is also looking into possibly hiring a professional to assist with Sunday workshops. It is very challenging to meet needs as a church right now. Pastor is working very hard to make sure that our members' needs are being met. That task is incredibly challenging at this time in the pandemic. It is a sad time in MANY ways.
6. Discuss Christmas and what is possible: Pastor has a viable option that could be done at various members' homes. There is a "Virtual" play with 21 scenes that could be divided among multiple families/ households. To produce this, there would need some additional people assisting. Cindy Lange offered to look at the play and help if able.

year, and Tom seconded. Motion passed. Possibly have some candelabras, wreaths, nativity, etc. We agreed that the worship committee, and Peg and Pastor should brainstorm some Christmas worship services options.

7. Budget Karin will send the council the budget proposal on its own for the council to review.
8. Stewardship: See old business.

Team/Committee Reports:

Worship	Learning/Witness
Property	Service
Finance	Young Adult Ministry
CDC Board & Finance	
Strategic Planning	

Tom will provide devotions next month

Adjourn: Motion by Margaret to adjourn and Jill seconded; meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Special prayers for Steve Youngren, Barbara Siljestrom, Marian Steneck

Next regularly scheduled meeting: December 14th, 2020 ZOOM:

Next Special meeting and additional meetings as needed

Tabled: Cell tower options waiting for additional info

Council By Month Agenda Items to be added:

June = Appoint the Audit Committee

July – New council members and Executive Committee is voted on

August= annual member review

September or October = begin S.W.O.T. planning

October/November = Nominating Committee needs to get started. (overseen by council president)

December = Annual Reports/summaries need to be submitted to the Church secretary for the Annual Report

Having the Christmas tree up and decorated will be very difficult this year. The nativity will be in the front. Ask members to contribute poinsettias. Tom suggested we have an "old fashioned" Christmas this year. Jill moved that we forgo the Christmas tree this

Sincerely,
Karin Jones,
BLC Secretary

LSSI BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICE CENTER GROOMING KITS

The LSSI Behavioral Health Service Center located here in Elgin helps individuals struggling with alcohol and drug addiction. The Center would again appreciate our gifts of grooming kits for the 30 clients in treatment at the Center at Christmastime.

Please consider donating a grooming kit **OR** donating \$15 for the Service Committee to buy the items needed for a grooming kit. Checks can be mailed to church, made payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Include *LSSI grooming kit* in memo line.

If you choose to donate a grooming kit, please do not make an extra trip to the store to shop. Please include the grooming kit items in your regular grocery shopping or online orders. Please shop safely!

Grooming Kit items:

<u>Men's Grooming Kit</u>	<u>Women's Grooming Kit</u>
Shampoo	Shampoo
Soap or Body Wash	Soap or Body Wash
Deodorant	Deodorant
Shave cream/Hand Lotion	Hand Lotion
Toothbrush	Toothbrush
Toothpaste	Toothpaste
Comb	Comb

The grooming kit items should be placed in a ziploc bag and be ready by December 13th.

To return kits, there are a few options:

Thursdays between 9:00 a.m. – 12:00, when Cindy



is in the church office. If you prefer that the grooming kit be picked up at your home, please contact Gayle Chiarugi at grizz1@aol.com or 847-710-4266 or call the church office at 847-741-8434.

Thank you for your care and concern for others!

ELGIN's HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS TOY DRIVE



The Community Crisis Center and the Salvation Army are collaborating for the 2020 holiday season. These two agencies, along with community supporters, will combine resources to support families in need in the Elgin area with toys for the holidays. We will be supporting this program by donating toys or money.

Monetary donations can be made online at elgintoygiveaway.org or checks may be mailed to church, made payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church by December 6th. Include *Toy Drive* in memo line.

If you choose to donate a toy, please do not make an extra trip to the store to shop. Please include your toy shopping with your regular shopping or online orders. Please shop safely!

Toys are needed in all age categories. List of toys can be found online at elgintoygiveaway.org or contact the church office for the toy list.

High need items from the toy list include:

Dolls: Barbie dolls, Baby dolls, Soft dolls

Remote control vehicles

Soccer balls

Craft sets, Science sets

Gifts for teens

What's HOT for 2020!

Pixar/Disney DVDs, Star Wars items, Superhero figures, Harry Potter items, Legos, OZO Bots
(Non-violent toys only. No guns, knives, weapons or action figures representing violence)

To return toys, there are a few options:

If you prefer, toys can be picked up at your home, please contact Gayle Chiarugi at grizz1@aol.com or 847-710-4266 or call Cindy in the church office at 847-741-8434.

Also, you can order toys online and have them shipped to the church office.

Thank you for making the holidays special for the children!

YOUTH GROUP/MISSION TRIP UPDATE

Greetings from the Youth Group! The Youth Group misses meeting in-person and being together. We sometimes meet on Zoom to play virtual games, share our highs and lows for the week and pray together.

We were so disappointed when Mission Trip 2020 to Lake Traverse, SD was cancelled. We love to serve others and build relationships with the other groups we work alongside and the community members we meet. Since we still wanted to help others, we decided to donate some of our funds here at home. We chose to support Project Backpack and Step It Up shoe drive to provide school supplies and shoes for students in the Elgin area. Yea! God! that we could make a difference!

Even with an uncertain future due to Covid, the Mission Trip Team has begun making plans for Mission Trip 2021. We chose to serve at the YouthWorks site in Duluth, MN in June 2021. On our Team is Emma Anderson, Cindy Camacho, Brenden Canham, Ivan Chimal, Kathryn Depaz, Julissa Gomez, Leslie Gomez, Ismael Gutierrez, Parker Jones, Giselle Luna, Domanik Malave, Yazmin Malave, Amalia Marquez, Felix Rendon,

Violet Rendon, Lucas Resener, Eli Richoz-Latigo, Nate Sensor, Owen Thomas and adult leaders Pastor Carol Book, Gayle Chiarugi and Gentry Jones. We are hoping to find one more adult leader to join us.

The youth will be writing Prayer Partner letters to invite you to become their prayer partners, to pray for them and donate to the 2021 Mission Trip. This pandemic has been so hard on everybody, but especially the youth. Family, school, friends, work, everything is different and stressful.

We pray,

Dear God, we praise you for all that you have done and all that you continue to do in our lives. Remind us of your promises, especially in these times when things are difficult, and we feel uncertainty and anxiety. Remind us that you are faithful to those who love you and trust you and follow you. We trust your plan and purpose in our lives. Amen. Please keep the youth in your prayers. And you are in our prayers. We so appreciate your support! Yea! God!

Gayle Chiarugi

BETHLEHEM'S 150th ANNIVERSARY

Last March many of us gathered to develop plans for the 150th birthday celebration of our church. The enthusiasm was great, and many wonderful ideas were shared and then our celebration plans came to a screeching halt due to the pandemic. We waited, praying the restrictions put in place to help slow the spread of the virus and keep everyone healthy would soon be relaxed and our celebration plans could be put into motion.

Over the last several months Rachel Campbell, Margaret Drafall, Cindy Lange, and Lin Cruse have met to discuss the possibility of moving forward with the celebration plans. With the current limitations placed on everyone limiting the number of people at gatherings, required distancing, and

greeting one another, for the time being our celebration plans must be set aside but not forgotten.

Bishop Curry has accepted the invitation to visit our church in January 2021. Pastor Carol and the church council will decide the best way to move forward with his visit. We will continue to explore ideas and ways to recognize the 150th birthday celebration. If anyone has suggestions please contact Rachel, Margaret, Cindy, or Lin.

Our church is strong, and our history is long, please continue to pray for our church, our country and each other.

Lin Cruse

A COUNT YOUR BLESSING CHALLENGE

I have a Facebook friend who gave herself a challenge: she would, for ten days in a row, tell us one thing for which she was thankful. "Hmm," I thought, "what a creative thing to do in this pandemic which threatens to last into the spring months."

I assume by "thing" she means a blessing, someone or something has done or meant something for which she is grateful---hence, a blessing. As I considered the blessing in my life, that blessing soon turned plural blessings. I could find daily blessings in my life when in the middle of a pandemic.

There is a hymn my Dad sang, and I especially remember the refrain:

"Count your blessings, name them one by one

Count your blessings, see what God has done

Count your many blessings, see what God has done

And it will surprise you what the Lord has done"

Jonathan Oatman 1897

At this time, those words are especially appropriate for me, when depression and discouragement tend to blacken my mood.

So, I have given myself a challenge, "Count your blessings" challenge. At the end of each day, I am going to "count my blessings" and make a list. The blessings may be frivolous, serious or simple—but something for which I am thankful.

I invite you to join me in "the Count Your Blessings" Challenge. Chose a time segment and, for each day during that time, write down your blessings. I imagine that all of us will be surprised "at what the Lord has done."

Rachel Campbell

These last few months have been a real learning experience for all of us! Bennett and Parker are on 100% virtual classes for both Elgin High School and Elgin Community College. It is hard to not be able to learn in person and hopefully a vaccine is discovered soon. It looks promising!

Parker broke his arm in an unfortunate go-cart accident and can do very little. Praise God it did not require surgery! Bennett tested positive for COVID on November 12th. He has cold-like symptoms that are minor. We are quarantined until Thanksgiving and so far, Gentry, Parker, & I are symptom free!

Gentry & I feel very blessed to have everything we need to get by during this time. We miss seeing everyone at BLC and we pray you are all well! I am ever so grateful to everyone that has contributed to bringing the BLC worships into our homes! And the music and meditation option on Tuesdays has been so incredibly beautiful. BLC has continued to "fill my cup" during this trying time.

Karin, Gentry, Bennett, & Parker Jones

A PANDEMIC THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, as we enter a season, traditionally of joy and celebration, we realize that this season of 2020 will be different. We will not have gathering celebrations of family and friends. We will not join together for laughter and fun. For some of us, this will mean a time that will not be joyful, but sad and lonely.

Heavenly Father remind us that you are our steady guide, always near, to give us hope in these uncertain and dismal times. Lead us through these days to understand the blessings of simplicity. Help us to know that all around us we can see and enjoy your gifts-----food, shelter and love and friendship. Help us, Lord, to enjoy your gifts-----a walk, a telephone call, a good book. And thank you, Lord, for ZOOM which has enabled us to hear your Word and connect us with those we dearly miss.

This pandemic journey has been difficult and frustrating. It continues, but with hope for an ending. Grant us patience with the knowledge that joy comes in the morning. That with your loving care and strengthening we will again celebrate together.

In Jesus name we pray.

Heather Seyller

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY NORTHERN FOX VALLEY AND NEW HOPE PARTNERSHIP

The pandemic affected the volunteering on house for much of the spring. But during those months, the four partnerships met monthly to work through recruiting new churches. New Hope added the following churches: Shepherd of the Prairie – Huntley, St. Laurence Catholic church – Elgin and St. Mary's parish – Elgin. There are now eight churches: Bethlehem, Christ the Lord Lutheran Church – Elgin, St Mary Catholic Church –

Huntley, First Congregational Church – West Dundee, and St. Catherine of Siena – West Dundee.

During the fall, a few of us worked on two houses: 233 Weston in Elgin and 1203 Sycamore in Lake in the Hills. Soon the new homeowners will be moving into their houses.

Due to COVID restrictions, there are only 5 volunteers allowed to work with the project manager at this time. There are two projects currently being worked on: Fox Valley Farms at 431 McHenry Avenue in Crystal Lake and Water Tower Crossing, a 4-lot development in Batavia.

I continue to serve on the board of directors of HFH-Northern Fox Valley as secretary. If you would like more information on Habitat, please contact me.

Cindy Lange

CHRISTMAS DONATION TO WORLD HUNGER

Since this Christmas, things are quite different and there is an element of the unknown of what COVID will bring.

World Hunger: You can honor or remember someone this Christmas with a donation to World Hunger.

Please fill out the form below with your information and mail it and check payable to "Bethlehem Lutheran Church" with World Hunger on the memo line. Donations will be reported in the January Crossings.

Regarding poinsettias, there will be some ordered to decorate the church, but we did not want people to come into the building to pick them up. Consider adding the poinsettia to your grocery order from Jewel, Walmart and Meijer.

Given by

Phone:

World hunger amount:

In Honor of:

In Memory of:

Donation is needed by December 17th.