
BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN NEWSLETTER

Pastor Sue Sinclair

JULY 2025

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FROM THE PASTOR...

FREEDOM

I associate the 4th of July with Freedom. So much of our country's history is connected to the search for freedom.

Early settlers, especially in the northern colonies, were often in search of religious freedom. Christians like the Puritans, Separatists (Pilgrims) and The Religious society of Friends (Quakers), and Jewish settlers all came to North America in search of religious freedom.

There were other opportunities for freedom that drew people to these shores. Economic and political freedoms drew many colonists. It was these that were at the heart of the American Revolution for independence that we celebrate.

The desire for freedom is strong, Paul wrote in the letter to the Galatians, "For freedom, Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." What Paul is talking about is being freed from the burden of sin. He calls us, to not take for granted the gift of salvation that Christ has given us. He reminds us to "not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another" and of God's commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Living by The Holy Spirit's guidance leaves no room for the bitterness, anger and maliciousness of the world. He reminds us that, "By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."

Having been set free, we are called to let that freedom be driven by love. May the love of Jesus Christ be shown in loving our neighbors.

~ Pastor Sue



Four young members of Bethlehem will be celebrating their First Communion on July 6.

~ Brielle Blankespoor
~ Macy Brueggeman
~ Edison Kerkvliet
~ Easton Cartmill



McKenna Bouwman, Mary Ann Swenson, Holly Horstman, Kock Family, Arnie Van Voorst, Shiela Hage, Arlyn Schreurs, Nate Weberg, Ed Baatz, Don Eiesland, Wayne Kollis, Michelle Johnson, Sarah Krupke, and all our Nursing Home residents (Joy, Marion, Bev, Marliss, Alice, Jean M.)



In Holy Baptism our gracious heavenly Father liberated us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We celebrate the July baptismal anniversaries of the following members of Bethlehem Lutheran:

Tripp Olson – 7/1	Ashlee Van Hill – 2
Tyler Kock – 3	Gary Kruse – 4
Mitch Rentschler – 4	Cindy Van Voorst – 7
Benjamin Bahnson – 9	Carol Vander Kolk – 9
AJ Whalen – 11	Nancy Halma – 14
Alicia Ahrendt – 17	Bria Berentschot – 19
Jean Mundt – 21	Randy Hamann – 21
Wil Van Hill – 21	Kyle Knutson – 25
Pam Hanson – 26	Ryker Rentschler – 2



The following couples will celebrate the gift of marriage this month by observing their wedding anniversaries:

July 8	Tim & Carla Kroger – 2000
July 13	Gavin & Taylor Lorenzen – 2024
July 18	Matt & Kelsey McKenney – 2009
July 21	Greg & Sandy Hanson – 2009
July 23	Grant & Jane Niemeyer – 2006
July 26	Paul & Sue Kippley – 1980
July 29	Ed & Jan Baatz – 1983
July 31	Luke & Chelsea Snyders – 2004

1	Grant Hoogendoorn, Bonnie Winter
3	Jakson Blankespoor
7	Damon Snyders, Carmen Van Dyke
9	Dansby Snyders, Dylan Whalen
10	Marilyn Caswell
11	Jessica (Jensen) Peterson, Bryce Kock, Jamie Kelly, Deb Vogelzang
12	Seth Bahnson, Peter Bahnson
13	Bronx Kramer, Karley McKenney, Briggs Van Dyke
15	John Folkens
19	Marilyn Ahrendt
20	Belah Kramer, Carla Kroger
21	Drew Van Dyke
22	Rachel Folkens, Angie Kuecker
26	Pam Hanson, June Junge
30	Vern Knutson, Kathy Rozeboom, Ava Van Dyke



GREETERS SCHEDULE

For July

6	– Greg & Cheryl Twedt
13	– Dan & Pam Moen
20	– Stan & Cynthia Haugland
27	– Jon & Gloria Bonjour



July Acolyte

6 th	Edison Kerkvliet
13 th	Brielle Blankespoor
20 th	Macy Brueggeman
27 th	Easton Cartmill



WORSHIP HELPERS THIS MONTH

Usher Team – Stan Haugland Team

Alter Guild – Kim Gayer & Teresa Kerkvliet

FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE

** Will not meet this month **



June 2025

Board of Properties

Those present: Larry VR, Nate C, Aric O., and Dianne E. The air conditioner in the Fellowship Hall kitchen has been fixed. The price for the new sump pump was around 700.00. Looking to replace the 12 lights in the north and east hallways. Nate will get some pictures for us to look at. Also talked about getting a different thermostat in the Fellowship Hall. June 28th we will need 4 guys and 2 power washers to clean the north side of the church. July 12 will be a workday in the courtyard.

Board of Lay Ministry

June 13th, 2025

Pastor's Report

Pastor will be on vacation from June 14th to the 25th of June. Kandi Anderson will cover emergencies during this time.

July 6th will be 1st Communion

VBS was a big success with 171 children and 85 volunteers

June 29th will be the community worship service for the 4th of July. Pastor will be preaching and Bethlehem will be providing and serving refreshments.

Pastor is finalizing plans for an upcoming Bible Study.

Pastor has done several funerals, weddings, and emergencies lately as she is the only ELCA minister in our county. She is also Dean of our Conference.

Pastor Evaluation

Areas of ministry were discussed. Strengths and weaknesses were highlighted. Suggestions were listened to.

Mission through Me.

If anyone has ideas about mission projects that they would like to pursue they should be brought before the board. We would like to encourage individuals and groups to become involved with missions that have meaning to them.

Board of Youth & Family

Board of Stewardship

Board of Evangelism

No other reports were turned in.



If you would like to provide special music during the summer, please call the office to line up the date and give song titles for the bulletin.



Summer Coffee Sign-up

There is a sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall, as you enter the kitchen, for summer coffee hour if you are interested in furnishing refreshments. If it's in honor of a special event, be sure to notify the office so it can be put in the bulletin and newsletter.

Thank you to all who have made coffee hour goodies so far this summer.



Inwood 4th of July – many hands make light work: Volunteers needed to help make Inwood 4th of July a success. We need volunteers to help in the food stands which are in the park after the parade and at the derby the evening of the 4th. For those that love to bake – pies are needed for the food stand in the park. Please try to have the pies at the park the morning of the 4th morning at 8-9am so that we have time to cut them before the parade (please no cream pies). If you have any questions about helping in the food stand you can call Tim (605-359-1562) or Leah (605-359-1245) Blankespoor.



~ Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time and talents this year during a True Northern experience for all 171 of the Vacation Bible School kids. TRUST JESUS!

~ Once again, thank you so much for your generous donation to the Larchwood Food Pantry. Your continued support for this ministry is appreciated by so many families in the area. It is because of people and organizations like you that we are able to keep the Larchwood Food Pantry shelves stocked and remain open for the needy families in our community. Thank you so much for supporting this important ministry of feeding hungry families. God Bless!

- The Larchwood Food Pantry at
Larchwood United Church of Christ

~ Thank you to the many hands in helping spruce up the court yard on Monday June 23. Pat & Darrel Bonnema, Andrea Hoogendoorn, Dan & Barb Pedersen, Jerry Van Voorst, and Gordon & Dianne Eiesland.



BLC MISSION STATEMENT:

"To welcome all people to seek and serve God as members of the Body of Christ."

BLC VISION STATEMENT:

We will be:

A welcoming Church:

Opening our doors and hearts to all who enter.

A Church that seeks after the heart of God:

Maturing in faith.

Trusting His word.

Living God's love.

A Church that is committed to one another:

Through fellowship.

Through love and service.

Through grace and forgiveness.

A Church that ministers to the world around us.

A Church that brings its gifts back to God:

Through good stewardship of time, talent, and treasures.