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# BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN NEWSLETTER

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Pastor Sue Sinclair

December 2025

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## From the Pastor:

### FEELING WELCOME

What are your fondest memories of being welcomed? Perhaps there has been someone in your life who modeled a welcoming spirit to you. I'd like you to remember how you felt being welcomed and perhaps remember a person who was a welcoming host or relative.

I think of my maternal grandmother who my son dubbed her 'Grandma Sunny'. She was welcoming in a way that was layered throughout who she was. When you arrived, she always had a big smile and a "howdy-do". But it was more than that. There was always refreshments of some kind at hand. She had a box of small gifts, so that, if she discovered that it was someone's birthday, or had a last minute Christmas guest, they would have a little something from her family.

I know that my brother & sister-in-law both had a close relationship with her that began with how warmly she welcomed them even before they were 'family.'

Even more important to my witnessing her capacity to be welcoming is how she treated people she found 'taxing'. She welcomed her bachelor brother-in-law every week for cards and a meal. I once heard him going on and on about 'Catholics'. She refilled his coffee cup with a mostly patient smile and her 'no nonsense' look and said, "Clifford, you know that I was raised Catholic, and my whole family is Catholic." Cliff responded, "Oh, I didn't mean *them*." Uncle Cliff required a lot of patience, but it didn't stop her from always being welcoming. She saw welcoming as a gift to be given.

I write all of this, because I think that it is helpful when we remember that we are a Church Family. Being welcoming is a part of our Church family as much as it is our individual families.

I was recently part of a seminar about how congregations have an opportunity to be welcoming, especially during the holidays called "The Invitational Christian & Inviting for Christmas."

I am proud and thankful that many of the things that we talked about are things that are already happening at Bethlehem.

I hope to initiate some of the suggestions from this seminar. As the Holidays approach and you give and receive invitations to celebrate with friends and family, I encourage you to consider how we, as part of a congregational family might share the joy of Christmas in the same way.

~Pastor Sue





Join us in celebrating our Lord's birth through the eyes, ears, and voices of our children.

**December 14 during 9:30 am worship service**

# Christmas Program



## CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SCHEDULE



December 24 at 5:00 pm.



## CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING

Our youth will be using this offering to help fill the shelves at local food banks.



## CIRCLES THIS MONTH

Fellowship Circle      Thurs., Dec. 11, 2:00 pm  
Hostess: potluck



Miracle



Sunday

December 7

*\*Pie & Ice Cream Sundaes during coffee hour\**

Thank you for all your generous contributions to the roof fund and the Mika family, just to name a few for 2025 ! Please help us fill baskets of food pantry donations and consider making a special donation for our church's ongoing repairs.

*Board of Stewardship*

### SPECIAL DATES FOR DECEMBER

- Dec. 7 – Second Sunday in Advent
- Dec. 14 – Third Sunday in Advent
- Dec. 21 - First day of winter
- Dec. 21 – Fourth Sunday in Advent
- Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve
- Dec. 25 – Merry Christmas!!
- Dec. 31 - New Year's Eve

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## WORSHIP HELPERS THIS MONTH

Usher Team: Gordon Eiesland  
Reader: Kim Tracy  
Altar Guild: Pam Moen, Marilyn Thiessen



## GREETERS SCHEDULE

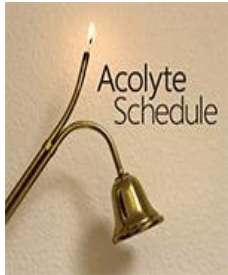
for December

Dec. 7 Clint & Becky Berentschot family  
Dec. 14 Andrea & Dustin Hoogendoorn  
Dec. 21 Jesse & Kaitlyn Van Beek  
Dec. 28 Greg & Cheryl Twedt



## December Acolytes:

7 – Ryker Rentschler  
14 – Jakson Blankespoor  
21 – Edison Kerkvliet  
28 – Brielle Blankespoor



## Lefse

*Bethlehem Lutheran Church Women are making and selling Lefse, taking orders now for Christmas. Cost is \$20 per dozen. Please call Pam Moen (753-4588) or the church office (753-4804) to place an order by December 2<sup>nd</sup>.*

## Coffee Schedule

For December

- 7 Board of Stewardship
- 14 Paul Claasen  
Dustin & Andrea Hoogendoorn  
Pastor Sue Sinclair
- 21 Stan & Cynthia Haugland  
Aric & Hannah Olson
- 28 NO COFFEE



## SUNDAY SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- ☪ Dec. 7 – Program Practice
- ☪ Dec. 14 – Christmas Program
- ☪ Dec. 21 – Christmas Parties for S.S.
- ☪ Dec. 28 – NO S.S.
- ☪ Jan. 4 – NO S.S.



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

- Dec. 13 Bruce & Jennifer Underberg-2012
- Dec. 22 Dan & Pam Moen-1972
- Dec. 30 Damon & Susan Bahnson-1972
- Dec. 31 Jerry & Cindy Van Voorst-1982
- Dec. 31 Koury & Laura Kramer-2005



 **DECEMBER**  
Birthdays

- 1 Cole Baatz, Pat Bonnema
- 3 Jane Niemeyer
- 5 Dustin Vogelzang
- 7 Kay Twedt
- 10 Dustin Hoogendoorn, Bennett Munger
- 14 Pam Kock
- 15 Jesse Van Beek
- 16 Alexis Knutson, Corey McKenney,  
Deb Van Roekel
- 17 Kaylee Kroger
- 18 Paige Thiessen
- 19 Lori Kock, Jacob Roemen, Onyxx Olson
- 20 Sheryl Phipps, Jennifer Kleeman,  
John Twedt,
- 22 Susan Bahnson
- 23 Jesse Roemen
- 28 David Lantz
- 29 Charmaine Pedersen
- 31 Betty Kock, Koury  
Kramer, Paul Kippley



***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 December baptismal anniversaries of the following members of Bethlehem Lutheran:***

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Myrt Kruse – Dec. 2    | Kyra Hanson – 2       |
| Teresa Kerkvliet – 3   | Alexus Jensen – 5     |
| Juanita Dreessen – 6   | Ava Van Dyke – 7      |
| Charmaine Pedersen – 9 | Darrel Bonnema-10     |
| Fred Dreessen – 10     | Lydia Whalen – 10     |
| Beth Hoogestraat-10    | Laura Kramer – 11     |
| Connie Douglass-11     | Marilyn Thiessen – 12 |
| Stacie Villanueva-14   | Cassidy Baatz – 17    |
| Carmen Van Dyke-17     | Glennie Wiltgen – 17  |
| Scott Hanson – 18      | Gordon Eiesland– 19   |
| Michelle Johnson – 20  | Joshua Winter – 20    |
| Ben Mouw – 20          | Cole Baatz – 24       |
| Dustin Vogelzang – 25  | Lori Kock – 29        |
| Kathy Rozeboom-31      |                       |



**Please keep the following people in your prayers:**

Norm Rentschler, Matt, Torri Klarenbeek, Kendra Michael, Sadie Moen, Dan Moen, Rebecca Wolf, Austin, Erin Van Der Brink and Hazel Mae, Olson

Family, McKenna Bouwman, Bob Mika, Holly Horstman, Arnie Van Voorst, Shiela Hage, Nate Weberg, Ed Baatz, Don Eiesland, Wayne Kollis, Michelle Johnson, Sarah Krupke, Mark, Lori, Sue, Anna, Sean, Tashina, and all our Nursing Home residents (Vern Serk, Joy, Marion, Bev, Jean M.)



### Prayer Partners



**Please make a contact or two with your prayer partner in the coming weeks.**

What makes them feel closer to God?  
How can they spread kindness?  
God please help\_\_\_\_\_.



Brass players are needed for the Christmas Eve service (all ages). Please contact Tracy Gayer at 753-4950 if you are willing and able to play for this special service.



*If you wish to share a poinsettia for this Christmas season please drop off by Dec. 20. Please have your name on it if you wish to take it home, or it will be tossed at the end of the month*

**thank you**

Thank you to those who set up the beautiful nativity for the season!

### Caring Ministry Opportunity

One of our members, Michelle Johnson, has a serious eye disease, Neurotrophic Keratitis (a rare degenerative disease affecting the normal functioning of cornea) and has had 2 cornea replacement rejections.

We are creating a directory of people who are willing and able to help her when the need arises. Some examples would be rides to drs appointments in Sioux Falls, picking up prescriptions in Canton or providing easy to reheat meals.

If you would like to be included in this directory, so that Michell could contact you for assistance, please let Pastor Sue know by calling or texting: (605) 933-0131.



### November 2025

#### Board of Education

Members: Liza, DJ, Becky, Deb, Michelle, Megan

New Business:

- Christmas program December 14
  - Becky will order 75 candy bags from the Larchwood Food Center and Becky will pick up December 12
  - Sunday school party will be after the program and we will watch a movie and have drink/popcorn
  - Need gifts for those helping with the program
  - Teacher gifts- coffee to go
  - Glennie order materials for next session
  - Older kids material is going well and continue with new material

- Board members
  - Kristi H will join the board next year
- Bible study
  - Will bring ideas and decide in December for January study

### Board of Stewardship

Members present: Dan Bruggeman, Cindy Van Voorst, Steve Arendt, Tom Rentschler

Reviewed budgets from other boards.

Budgets were submitted to Hannah Olson for the Annual Meeting.

Miracle Sunday planned for December 7.  
Congregation appreciation following the service with pie and ice cream.

10 total pies (3 pumpkin, 3 pecan, 2 apple, 1 cherry, and 1 gluten free)

3 gallons of ice cream (2 vanilla and 1 chocolate).

Toppings: chocolate, caramel, peanuts, sprinkles, and Oreos.

Drinks: coffee and water.

We will have to find out who is on the coffee schedule for that Sunday.

New board member: Nancy Halma

### Board of Properties

The board of properties met on Nov. 12. Those present: Larry V.R., Nate C., Clint B, Brett B., Dianne E., and our new member Gary T. Frustration! Frustration! We have some leaks. Larry called the roofer, and they were expected to come the week of the 10th. Brett got a quote from one company for replacing the 3 air conditioners on the east side of the church. It is complicated, some of the lines may be buried under concrete. He will get another bid. We will

put up the nativity set the Sat. after Thanksgiving, at 1:00. The water filter for the coffee pot has been changed, so should be good to go for the next 2 years.



### A Year-End Reminder

Please remember that all year-end contributions must be received by Sunday, December 28, 2024. This allows us enough time to make one final bank deposit and apply the contributions to your 2025 Giving Statements. Keep this date in mind. We want to keep your records as accurate as possible. Your generosity is always appreciated. If you have questions, please contact Noah Kerkvliet, Financial Secretary.

### **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.

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