

December 2017/January 2018

## ***Advent 2017: In a Different Light***



We are people wired to judge others. We judge their clothes and kids, their jobs and their choices. Jesus was constantly judged for the people he spent time alongside. This Advent, we walk with Mary as she and others experience the harsh light of judgment from those around her as a young, single mom. Little did she know, the child she carried would put all creation, wounded and broken, in a different light. We believe there is a "light no darkness has overcome." (John 1:5) May the light of Jesus help you see your family, work and play in a different light!

## *You are invited to Christmas at Bethlehem*

### ***Early Christmas Eve Worship with Communion and Candlelight***

**Saturday, December 23 at 5:15 p.m.** in the Sanctuary

### ***Christmas Eve Worship with Communion and Candlelight***

**Sunday, December 24 at**

**10:00 a.m.** with organ, piano, choir, handbells

**1:00 and 3:00 p.m.** with organ, piano, special music

**5:00 p.m.** with praise band

**9:00 p.m.** with piano and special music

Nursery care will be available at the 1:00 and 3:00 services. 5:00 service will be broadcast live on KGIM 1420 AM.

### ***Christmas Day Worship with Communion***

**Monday, December 25 at 10:00 a.m.**

Transportation will be available for the 10:00 a.m. services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

There will be **no** supper or worship on Wednesday, December 27.

*We will have our regular weekend services on Saturday, December 30 at 5:15 p.m.  
and Sunday, December 31 at 8:30 & 10:45 a.m.*

## **Connecting with God, One Another and Our Mission in the World**

Bethlehem Lutheran Church + Aberdeen, SD + (605) 225-9740 + [www.bethlehemaberndeen.org](http://www.bethlehemaberndeen.org)



We've had some very busy months in the Pre-K classroom! We learned about community helpers, dinosaurs and penguins and visited the fire station. We will also be learning all about the story of Jesus' birth and look forward to all the wonder and excitement of the Christmas season. We've been singing

our little hearts out in Kindermusik with Miss Emily and are very excited to perform our Christmas Program for our families and friends on December 21<sup>st</sup>.



Craving a tasty treat? Make sure to check out our Schwan's fundraiser! **When you order between now and December 29, 20% of product and 40% of e-certificate sales will go back to the scholarship fund. Visit [Schwans-Cares.com](http://Schwans-Cares.com), enter the campaign ID 35175, and your selections will be delivered to your door.**

We would love for your child and family to join us next year! **Registration for the 2018-2019 school year is going on now.** We

are filling up quickly so register early to ensure you have a spot!

**Thank you** to all of you for your support with grocery receipts, Box Tops for Education and all your prayers. We wish you all a very blessed Christmas and a wonderful new year!

**Thank you** to the men's ministry for replenishing our supply of **Faith Chests**. This fall, the group built over 80 faith chests which are given out at baptisms. Thank you!!!

## Tot Gym

With winter upon us, Tot Gym will be starting back up. Bring your tots (those younger than kindergarten) on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10:30 to noon. We'll kick off the year on Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>! Let the kids run off some energy, and adults can visit with each other. Parental supervision is required, and the cost is free! Invite your friends as this is open to all, not just regular BLC participants. Enter through the south (main entrance) or west (education wing) doors.

## Prayer Pillows

We will be hosting the Prayer Pillow Milestone on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>. Parents are invited to attend the learning session with their children during Christian Education that day and to bring their children to worship for the blessing in the service and to pick out pillows. **Parents of children in Pre-Kindergarten Sunday and Wednesday School, be watching the mail for your postcard invitation with details on the time of the class each day!**

## Reminder

We have a break from Christian Education on December 24 through January 3. Sunday School resumes on January 7<sup>th</sup>. Wednesday School resumes on January 10<sup>th</sup>!

Our next First Communion class will be in the early spring. Stay tuned for more details on the date and registration information.

**Thank you** to all who supported the Book Fair in November. We earned over \$800 in Scholastic Rewards points which we use for the Pre-K and Sunday and Wednesday School programs.

## Vacation Bible School

It's cold outside, but we are already planning for VBS 2018! VBS will be held on June 4-8. Check back next month to find out this year's theme!



## Wednesday Service Projects



Our second service project of the year was a huge hit. Kids LOVED making fleece tie blankets. **Students in grades 1-5 made 50 blankets on November 15<sup>th</sup>.** Most of the blankets were shared with local elementary school counselors who will give the blankets to children they think can use them. The rest will be handed out to families through Christmas donations and pastoral care visits.



## The Story of Christmas

The December 2017 Bible Reading Plan is all about Christmas. This month's handout has Bible stories, questions, an activity, and a prayer you can pray together as a family. Grab your copy today. Kids can get a prize from Melissa if they bring back the sheet signed by a parent!

## FACE TO FACE WITH TEENS

Wednesdays at 7:15 p.m. beginning  
January 17<sup>th</sup> in the East Fellowship Hall

No one ever said parenting is easy. Now, add in technology, social media, drugs and self-esteem, and parents are either very worried or pretend there are no problems. Sometimes we just don't know where to turn? Five sessions over five weeks will be held on crucial topics to help parents navigate through these teenage years. Come learn strategies to lovingly be face to face with your teen; be encouraged to know you are not alone on the parenting journey; leave with information and valuable resources.

**Topics/Speakers will include:** Social Media and technology, medical and counseling professionals on drugs/alcohol, depression, cutting, signs to watch for and resources that can help. **Wednesdays at 7:15 p.m. starting January 17<sup>th</sup> in the East Fellowship Hall.** Contact Pastor Kevin with any questions.

Before you open  
these...



Open this and read  
from Luke 2:8-20.

Center your lives on the  
**REAL** reason for the  
Season!

### ICE SKATING



## Party

**Sunday, January 14**

**6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**Odde Ice Arena**

**Bring the family for skating, snacks & fun!**

You are invited to  
**Bethlehem's Winter Carnival**  
Friday, February 2 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Our evening will include Games, Inflatables,  
Bingo, Cake Walk, Face Painting, Balloon  
Animals, BBQs, Chips & Ice Cream.

Invite your friends, neighbors, and co-workers  
to join us! This event is FREE for everyone.

## Is God Calling?

January 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:40 a.m. in the Hub

Have you ever felt the nudge to serve the church somehow? God calls people at different ages to serve as musicians, youth workers, Deacons and Pastors. Share in a conversation about how you may know that God is calling you and what next steps could look like. Questions? Pastor Kevin [kbergeson@bethlehemaberdeen.org](mailto:kbergeson@bethlehemaberdeen.org)



## Study and Share

All Women are welcome and urged to attend the monthly Study and Share Bible Study. Women of all generations gather to discuss the study that is printed in the monthly Women of the ELCA magazine, "Gather". The January/February 2018 study subject is Studying Scripture. The study author, Mark Alan Powell asks us, "...how do we respect other interpretations and learn from the perspectives of others, even if these conflict with our own?", along with many more questions.

Copies of the study will be available or can be picked up at the church office. Come as you are able! There is a seat and a coffee mug for you. **Saturday, January 13, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room.** The next business meeting of the WELCA planning committee will be following Study and Share on January 13, 2018.



## Welcome Marion Hartung

The staff and congregation welcome Marion Hartung as the

Business Office Assistant. Marion began her duties on November 29<sup>th</sup>. The position of Business Office Assistant is a part-time position to assist with financial duties for the congregation. Marion and her husband, Dennis, have two grown children: Scott Hartung and family of Aberdeen and Pr. Sarah Goldammer and family of Sioux Falls.

Marion has served various ways as a member of Bethlehem, including serving as Congregation President in 2011. You may also recognize Marion as one of Bethlehem's part-time Pastoral Care Ministers. Welcome Marion!

## Thank You from the Bethlehem Piecemakers!

BLC Piecemakers would like to thank everyone for their participation, donations, and prayers that make their weekly mission projects possible. All of their 2017 quilts and kits have been delivered to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) in St. Paul, MN. It is because of your kindness and generosity that they were able to donate **242** quilts, **137** baby-care kits, **80** personal-care kits, **3** sewing kits, and **203** school kits to be distributed around the world to people and families during times of hardship, disaster, and conflict. All of these items were constructed almost entirely from donated items from caring people like you who want make a difference in the world.

In addition, 402 lbs. of rolled bandages, 5 lbs. of washcloths, 129 lbs. of pillowcases, and 8 lbs. of hotel-size soaps were donated to Global Health Ministries to be used by missionary hospitals and clinics.

Everyday the need for quilts, kits, bandages, and medical supplies continues to increase as more people around the world find themselves in need of a helping hand. It is only because of each of you that Piecemakers and LWR can continue to help the thousands of people who are in urgent need of assistance. Something as simple as a quilt or a personal-care kit can send someone a strong message of hope for the future and make their life a little easier and a little more comfortable.

Thank you, also, to all who made the Piecemaker's quilt sale a success. The money from this sale is used to truck the completed items to St. Paul and is donated to LWR to be used for overseas shipping costs.

**Every Tuesday 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon Piecemakers meet at the church to work on quilts, bandages, etc. Anyone interested in helping is welcome to join them.**

Thank you....thank you again!

## November 30, 2017 Financial Stewardship Summary

### GENERAL FUND

#### Analysis of Budgeted Revenues & Expenses

	<u>MTD</u>	<u>2017 YTD</u>
Revenues	\$ 131,189	\$ 1,126,440
Expenditures	\$ 116,098	\$ 1,242,119
<b>Net Operating</b>	<b>\$ 15,091</b>	<b>\$ (115,679)</b>

#### Summary of Assets & Liabilities

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 508,561
Payables due within 15 days	\$ (23,917)
Due to Restricted Funds	\$ (966)
Pre-paid 2018 revenue reserve	\$ (2,282)
Reserved for EOFY allocation	\$ (272,048)
Reserved for Others/Designated accounts	\$ (103,360)
Due to Mortgage Fund	\$ (111,690)
<b>Total Unrestricted Cash Assets</b>	<b>\$ (5,702)</b>

### MORTGAGE & FUTURE MAINTENANCE FUNDS

#### Income Statement

	<u>MTD</u>	<u>2017 YTD</u>
Revenues, Investment Activity & Other Sources	\$ 14,267	\$ 218,249
Expenditures	\$ 11,206	\$ 235,274
<b>Net Operating</b>	<b>\$ 3,061</b>	<b>\$ (17,025)</b>

#### Summary of Assets & Liabilities

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 162,150
Due from General Fund	\$ 111,690
<b>Total Mortgage Fund Assets</b>	<b>\$ 273,839</b>
 Future Maintenance Account Cash Assets	 \$ 11,825
 Mortgage Loan Payable	 \$ 2,143,122
Monthly Mortgage Payment	\$ 13,238

### SPECIAL DESIGNATED FUNDS

Restricted Fund (Social Concerns, WELCA, Memorials, Grace Place Bookstore & special gifts)	\$ 58,092
Endowment Fund	\$ 527,152

## Audit Committee Review



The Audit Committee conducted an annual review of fiscal records and procedures of the 2016 records, completing their field work and testing on October 3, 2017.

The Committee reported that the financial records were accurate and procedures followed properly, in accordance with policy.

A copy of the Audit Report is available through the Business Office or David Frank, Audit Team Leader.

David Frank, Team Leader, Kristi Dutenhoeffer, Jessica Falken

## As we approach year-end: A Reminder Regarding IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVERS

It was back in December, 2015, that the IRA Charitable Rollover Act was passed by Congress. This act permanently extended the provision for individuals age 70½ and older to be allowed to make tax-free distributions from individual retirement accounts (IRAs) to a qualified charitable organization. The treatment continues to be capped at a maximum of \$100,000 per taxpayer each year. An IRA rollover is a tax-exempt distribution from the IRA. The amount transferred can be used to meet the donor's required minimum distribution. Amounts in excess of \$100,000 must be included in income but may be taken as an itemized charitable deduction, subject to the usual AGI annual caps for contributions.

For those of you who are 70 ½ and older, an IRA Charitable Rollover may especially be beneficial to you if...

- 1) you have significant assets in an IRA, or 2) you do not itemize deductions for income tax purposes, or
- 3) you earn enough to have part of your deductions phased out.

## MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

### Social Concerns Memorials

**Given in memory of Norman Schuh by:** Linda & Larry Kirnan

**Given in memory of Mrs. Joyce (Louis) Brush by:** Linda & Larry Kirnan

### Worship and Music Memorials

**Given in memory of Marlene Ketelhut by:** friends and family

**Given in memory of Jennings Tobin by:** Maxine Holmes

**Given in memory of Lyle Fritz by:** Maxine Holmes

**Given in memory of Ernest E. Kempf by:** Janis Pearson

### Youth Ministry Memorials

**Given in memory of Marlene Ketelhut by:** friends and family

**Given in memory of Joseph W. Atkinson by:** Janis Pearson

**Given in memory of Ruth Beyers by:** Patty Weisz-Kalmes

### Visual Enhancement Memorials

**Given in memory of Monte Herting by:** Connie Walker

### Pre-K Scholarship Memorials

**Given in memory of Marlene Ketelhut by:** friends and family

### Unrestricted Memorials

**Given in memory of Monte Herting by:** Brenda Glasford

### General Fund Memorials

**Given in memory of Jerry Kleinknecht by:** Sandra Kleinknecht

**Given in memory of Pat Valle by:** Kay & Phil Van Dover, Langvardt, Valle & James P.C., Irene Wolfe

**Given in memory of Mary Hallstrom by:** Jerry & Susan Brick

**Given in memory of Tish Hinds by:** Gay & Jerry Nichols, William Hinds

### Kitchen Fund Memorials

**Given in memory of Ernest Kempf by:** Morris & Nancy Mueller

**Given in memory of Patrick Omland by:** by Janis Pearson

### Milestone Ministry Memorials

**Given in memory of Mary Hallstrom by:** LaRheta Fulker

### Mortgage Fund Memorials

**Given in memory of Turk McNeil by:** Don & Carolyn Lang

**Given in memory of Orn Hier by:** Gary & Dlon Kvernevig

**Given in memory of Kenny Amundson by:** Gary & Dlon Kvernevig

**Given in memory of Mildred Olson by:** Gary & Dlon Kvernevig

### Social Concerns Honorarium

**Given in honor of Margareth Bunsness' 100th birthday by:** Linda & Larry Kirnan

### Worship and Music Honorariums

**Given in honor of Arliss Alberts' Central High School Hall of Fame by:** Linda & Larry Kirnan

### Reformation Giving Days Honorarium

**Given in honor of the Tuesday Women by:** Karen Dunker

### Wednesday Supper Honorarium

**Given in honor of George & Ruth Casanova's Wedding Anniversary by:** Raymond & Jeanine Peterson

# Welcome New Members

*The following new members were received on November 4, 5 or 8.  
Please give them a warm welcome into this community of faith.*



Ryan, Raquel, Regan\* &  
Brooklynn\* Ball



Spencer, Jill, Teagan &  
Temperance Cody



Sarah Donaldson



Bea Fischer



Dwight Guthmiller



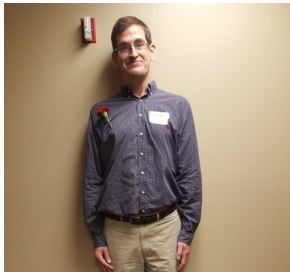
Kimberly Haas



Miranda Haugen &  
Patrick Letze



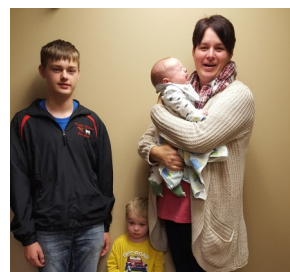
Chris, Stephanie, Bailee  
& Abe Holscher



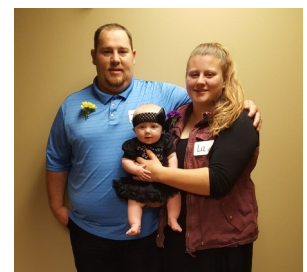
Keith Jacobson



Linda Johnson and Anna  
Schwan & children, Stella  
Meier, Lydia Meier, Ryder  
& Ivan Schwan



Andy, Kara, Steven,  
Henry & Cort Paulson



Thomas, Elizabeth &  
Bethany\* Peterman



Matthew & Amber  
Sandve



Bruce & Carol Sukut



Richard & Amanda  
Weaver

Not pictured: Luke &  
Beckett Bruns

\*denotes previously  
baptized member





## Lunch & Learn

### *Spark Joy... The Art of Gratitude and Journaling*

You are invited to gather with us in the Fireside Room **Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 over the lunch hour, 12:10 – 12:50 p.m.**, to share in caring conversation about the topic of Gratitude and Journaling.

This is a single topic, “pop-up” event for this one Friday noon session. The session will be hosted by Marion Hartung, Joell Rachel and Janis

Heier. Our guest speaker will be Ashley Geist-Cusick. Come and rejuvenate yourself and prepare a mindset of gratitude for the New Year! This session is rooted in the following scripture: *Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus! 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.*

Please register at the church office or email [jheier@bethlehemaberdeen.org](mailto:jheier@bethlehemaberdeen.org).

### ***Let's read Galatians together***

Ever felt nudged to read the Bible more? This no-experience-necessary, four week study will help you practice opening scripture and wandering through what God may be up to in your life. Galatians is a short letter that touches on big themes of faith. Bring your curiosity! **Sundays at 9:40, Fireside Room, starting January 14<sup>th</sup>.** Questions? Pastor Kevin [kbergeson@bethlehemaberdeen.org](mailto:kbergeson@bethlehemaberdeen.org)

### **Chair Yoga**

**1st Tuesday of Month from 12:10-12:40 p.m.**

Disconnect from the demands of life and unite breath, movement and faith-based meditation on the 1st Tuesday of each month from 12:10-12:40 p.m. in rooms E12 & 13. Chair Yoga is a gentle form of Yoga that is done in a chair or even standing using a chair for stability and support. Benefits of Yoga/Chair Yoga include stretching and strengthening of the body, better breathing habits, stress reduction, a sense of well-being and more. Chair Yoga is suitable for all bodies, ages and abilities. This class is free of cost and will be led by Jolene Malsam. (No equipment is necessary for this class.) Contact Jolene at (605) 380-6111 or [Jolene.Malsam@gmail.com](mailto:Jolene.Malsam@gmail.com) with any questions.

## ***Come One, Come All***

The Welcoming Ministry Team and the Serving Ministry Team are teaming up for a night of food and entertainment. We will be having a **soup/chili cook-off on Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. with the movie Ratatouille and popcorn starting at 6:30 p.m.** A free-will offering will be taken to raise funds for the Wednesday night meal ministry. All of this is happening in the Fellowship Hall. So bring your kids, your grandparents, and the rest of your family – big or small – to our event. To register in the cook-off, please inform Laurie Richardson (290-0150 or [Iristau117@aol.com](mailto:Iristau117@aol.com)). Questions can be forwarded to Laurie, Jeremy Atkins or Grace Chipman.



The Bethlehem Handbells were invited to play at a Reformation worship service in Faulkton on November 19.

**Reformation** 500  
*A Story Worth Celebrating*  
**Giving Days!**  
 October 28 – November 1

**Thank you for your generosity during  
 Giving Days - together we raised  
 \$2,334.05 for Meals on Wheels and  
 the 2-1-1 Help Line.**

## Joint Commission Meeting Highlights November 20, 2017

President -Elect Melissa Neville called the meeting to order. Pr. Jeff opened with devotions.

### Membership Changes:

#### **Members Added:**

Baptisms: Liam Daniel Iverson 10/21/2017; Natalie Rae Pigors 10/21/2017; Cambrie Autumn Goethals 10/22/2017; Deacon Russell Braun 10/22/2017; Taylee Marie Kamphuis 10/28/2017; Alexis Marie Colleran 10/29/2017; Malcolm Joseph Franks 11/11/2017; Elijah James Franks 11/11/2017; Tucker Allen Trosen 11/11/2017; Drake Robert Danielson 11/18/2017; Porter DeLoss Winterboer 11/18/2017; Ella Rose Kraemer 11/19/2017

New Members (received 11/4, 11/5 & 11/8): Ryan, Raquel, Regan\* & Brooklynn\* Ball; Luke & Beckett Bruns; Spencer, Jill, Teagan & Temperance Cody; Sarah Donaldson; Bea Fischer; Dwight Guthmiller; Kimberly Haas; Miranda Haugen; Chris, Stephanie, Bailee & Abe Holscher; Keith Jacobson; Linda Johnson; Patrick Letze; Andy, Kara, Steven, Henry & Cort Paulson; Thomas, Elizabeth & Bethany\* Peterman; Matthew & Amber Sandve; Anna Schwan, Stella Meier, Lydia Meier, Ryder Schwan & Ivan Schwan; Bruce & Carol Sukut; Richard & Amanda Weaver

\*Denotes already a baptized member of BLC

#### **Members Removed:**

Deaths: Penny Flack 10/24/2017; Patricia Valle 11/8/2017; Mary Hallstrom 11/9/2017

**Collaborating** – Reports from each of the teams were shared including:

#### **Financial Resource Team**

- The Financial Resources Team shared in part of the Joint Commission meeting to discuss the stewardship of estate & special gifts that were received.
- Creating Room at the Table Beyond Bethlehem funds will be sent to Pine Ridge to support the Retreat Center Ministry & Pastor Kay.

#### **Welcome Ministry Team**

- Training will be scheduled for the nursery and greeters.

#### **Human Resource Team**

- Staff transitions:
  - Retirement: Steve Casanova effective May 25, 2018.
  - Resignation: Valerie Johnson effective November 29, 2017. Cathy Durst is being trained to fill in the interim, and a search is underway.
  - Search: Director of Welcoming & Serving – Interviews continue.
  - Vacancy: Coordinator of Contemporary Worship - Kris Wollman has been filling in on Wednesdays for worship.
  - Additional part-time Custodian: accepting applications

Meeting closed with prayers of thanks and help.

## MEET THE LEADERS OF BETHLEHEM

### Kevin Foss - Property Resource Team



Kevin, Kerri, Joran & Esten Foss

**On what team are you currently serving at BLC?** I currently serve on the Property Resource Team.

**Have you served on any teams in years past at BLC?**

I have served on the Human Resource Team, Church President, Building Committee Co-chair, and Call Committees.

**Background:** I grew up in Olivia, MN and went to college and roomed with a friend from Aberdeen. A job opportunity came up through this friend and another to come to Aberdeen.

**Family:** Wife Kerri and children Joran and Esten and mom, Joan Foss.

**How long have you been a member of BLC?** 12 years

**What keeps you at Bethlehem?** The people (friends) and mission of Bethlehem.

**How have the ministries at BLC affected your life and your faith?** I feel that the ministries have provided a direction and focus to my faith in Jesus. They have helped me to grow preparing me for the next chapters of my life as they happen.

**How has your involvement with your team affected your perspective of this church and/or yourself?** Maintaining a large facility is an extremely important task that requires important attention to carefully using the resources of the people caring for God's house.

**What is the biggest challenge placed before your team?** Finding a person to fit into Steve's very large shoes after he retires!

**If you had to pick one current ministry at BLC you think instrumental for the future development of this church, what would that be?** Youth Ministries, we need to teach our children of God's word.

## Year End Giving

This holiday season, we wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous support of Bethlehem Lutheran Church this past year with your gifts of time, talent and offering contributions. We look forward to your continued support of the ministries in the year ahead. You may find electronic giving a most welcome way to make your offering. **To make an online gift visit: [tinyurl.com/blcgiving](http://tinyurl.com/blcgiving).**

For gifts to be included on your 2017 Contributions Statement, offerings must be received in the Business Office by Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup> or post-marked by Saturday, December 30<sup>th</sup>. **Our Business Office will be open until 12:00 noon on Friday, December 29<sup>th</sup>.** *Thank you* for sharing in God's work through Bethlehem.

**BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
1620 Milwaukee Ave NE  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
(605) 225-9740  
www.bethlehemabernethy.org  
office@bethlehemabernethy.org

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## **Congregation Meeting**

On **Sunday, December 17th at 9:40 in the Fellowship Hall** will be a Congregation Meeting which will include election of leaders and written reports from teams. Everyone is invited to share in the Congregation Meeting and voting members are encouraged to participate in the election.

## ***Senior Adult Communion & Fellowship***

**Monday, December 18 at 2:00 p.m.  
East Fellowship Hall**

Members and friends of Bethlehem are invited to share in worship & fellowship. It will be a wonderful time to connect with others, the pastors, and pastoral care ministers. Please RSVP so we can prepare enough snacks. Transportation is also available by calling the office.

## ***This Is Us: Messy faith in light of Jesus***

Our lives, like a TV series, have scenes, episodes and seasons. Some are good, some are bad, and some leave us in tears. How does our trust in the promises of Jesus shape our lives in the coming year? How can He be our light? Tired of the drama? Come rest in the promises of Jesus we find in the first chapter of Mark: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near!" We pray this new year starts with an a-ha moment about this life: *This Is Us*, when God is with us! **Beginning in January.**

## ***Small Groups Return!***

Connect in a small group and discover a new group of people, with similar interests and similar questions of faith. No experience necessary! Gather, check in, pray and have a conversation connecting life and faith. See the options at the round table by the Welcome Desk after Christmas. Groups meet at different times of the week and start the week of January 7<sup>th</sup>.