



sharing the bread of life with the hungry world

bethlehem lutheran church *newsletter*

Volume 55 Issue 6 July 2020



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Dear Bethlehem Family and Friends,

While reading recently, I came across the following quote: "In Christ, we are forgiven, redeemed, and made to be a community united in faith. Thanks be to God."

I began thinking about the last couple of years of life at Bethlehem. The ups and the downs, the trials and the challenges, the joys and the tears. I began thinking about the past 6 months that I have been your pastor...from the joys of installation day to the fears of pandemic. From the hopes you were filled with when you called me as your pastor to where we are now, wondering what the future holds. It has been a roller coaster. It has rocked many of us to our core.

This past Sunday we gathered for a congregational meeting to talk through new structural and staffing changes for our ministry together. Changes that were first proposed in the mission forward report are now coming to fruition. For some of us, these changes are exciting. For others of us, these changes are hard. But here is the thing...no matter where we stand on the way Bethlehem is moving forward, "in Christ we are forgiven, redeemed, and made to be a community united in faith." That means we don't need to agree on each and every little thing. Disagreement can be healthy and help us to grow. But we do need to remember that even in the midst of our disagreements, we are made to be a community united in faith. That means we are a community that lifts each other up in prayer. We are a community that cares for the least and the loss. That means we are a community that proclaims hope and joy and love to the world because we know who holds our future.

I don't know how each of you is feeling about the world today. I don't know how every single one of you is faring in this pandemic. But I do know that every single one of you is important to God and important to Bethlehem. Each and every single one of you is a valued voice in our family. Every single one of you is made to be a part of our community united in faith. We are a community that sets down its differences to remember that each and every single person we meet is forgiven and redeemed, too, a community that shares the bread of life with a hungry world.

As we move forward into the future of Bethlehem, it is my hope that we can continue to listen and learn from each other. I welcome a chance to chat with you on the phone, in the office (Monday-Wednesday), or will gladly gather with you on any Friday at a location of your choice for a "Find Me Friday" conversation. Keep the faith, dear ones, and know that "in Christ, we are forgiven, redeemed, and made to be a community united in faith." Thank you for calling me to this community. Thanks be to God for his saving grace.

Your partner on the journey,

Pastor Amy Eisenmann



A big **thank you** to everyone who contributed to our project to help the Hospitality House. Many different

items were given and they were all very much appreciated. Thanks also to those who contributed a monetary gift. Bus tickets will be purchased with the money. **The Service Council appreciates your generosity!**

Bethlehem Congregation: Thank you for showing your appreciation for our pastor by your generous contributions to Pastor Amy's Moving Fund. Your thoughtfulness allowed Pastor Amy to move debt-free!



Holy Communion Options During Pandemic

1. Call the church office to set up a time and Pastor Amy can bring socially distanced communion to you and your family or friends at your home.
2. Grab your friends and neighbors and set up a time with the church office to have your own communion service with Pastor presiding at Bethlehem's outdoor worship space.
3. Refrain from communion until we are able to have it as a congregation again.



BACKPACK PROJECT UPDATE

Due to circumstances this school year, the Service Council is proceeding with the Backpack Project a little differently this year. The council will be purchasing the backpacks. If you would like to help out, we are asking members to give monetary gifts that will be used to purchase school supplies for students at Lincoln School in Cedar Falls. Please memo your donations as the Backpack Project.

Thank you so much for supporting this project!

CHURCH STAFF

Amy Eisenmann - Pastor

Church phone: 319-266-3541

Cell phone: 218-290-3982

pastoramy@bethlehemcf.net

Hudson Lourenco - Organist

Zachary Rogers - Digital Support

Diane Bowman - Office Business Assistant

office@bethlehemcf.net



2020-20201

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Kurt Leistikow - President
319-269-7178

Jill Schulte- Vice President
319-290-5725

Mindy Fisher - Secretary
319-290-4365

Connie Johnson: 319-610-7449

Mardy Holst: 319-277-0328

Reed Hunemuller: 319-277-6381

Brendan Alexander: 319-290-1237

NEW PRAYER CHAIN GUIDELINES

Prayer Chain

The Prayer Chain has some new guidelines to help maintain an accurate and current prayer chain. The Prayer Chain will now re-set at the beginning of each month. If you would like to keep your loved one on the prayer chain, we invite you to contact the church office and let us know you would like your person to stay on the list. Our hope is that in keeping a current, managed list, we can direct our prayers to where they are most needed.



GIVING MADE EASY!

Scan the QR code with your smart phone to share your offering with Bethlehem.

COUNCIL'S APPROACH

- Reflection: What is Bethlehem's purpose? What are our core values? What is God calling us to be?
- Considering input from the following sources:
 - Mission Forward Team Report
 - Congregational Survey
 - Letters from congregation
 - Face to face discussions
 - Staff listing of roles and responsibilities
 - Pastor and staff feedback

CURRENT MISSION COUNCILS



Our current structure, made up of 8 councils and 3 committees

COUNCIL'S APPROACH

So what exactly did we do?

- Reviewed Mission Forward Report
- Asked for additional congregational feedback
- Met with the Synod for guidance
- Benchmarked other local and national churches
 - Discussed church structure with leaders and members of local churches
 - Reviewed examples of other church structures and job descriptions
- Studied articles regarding church organization and change

MISSION FORWARD REPORT

Goal:

Ensure all voices of the congregation are heard.

How:

- 25 cottage meetings
- 25 forums between services
- Online survey (166 respondents)
- Feedback forms
- In-person/email discussion
- Interviews with staff and Councils

Result:

25-page report that details:

- where we are as a church today
- identification of our strengths and challenges
- visions for the future
- what the congregation desires from the next pastor

MISSION FORWARD REPORT

Key Takeaways

1. Confusing structure
2. Unclear staff roles and responsibilities
3. Difficulty finding volunteers
 - e.g. "why should I volunteer when we pay ____"
4. Lack of congregational engagement
5. Need leadership for family activities
6. Need stronger youth programs to attract and maintain families
7. Staff accountability is lacking

These 7 ideas were the final take-aways from the Mission Forward Report
...things needing to be worked on as we move forward.

CHANGE LEADERSHIP

Mission Forward

Carissa Froyum Rolse - Chair
Becky Chittenden - Secretary
Theresa Elverum
Zac Enbrecht
Jack Gregersen
Reg Green
Ellen Hermanson
Terry Kestner
Linda Mixdorf
Erica Nelson
Adam Reilly

Call Committee

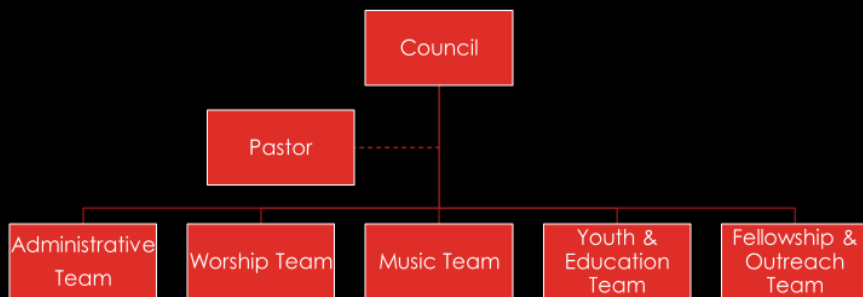
Erica Nelson - Chair
Paul Rea
Butch Naber
Theresa Elverum
Scott Davison
Sabrina Leistikow
Dennis Juel
Jean Sackett

Council

Mark Halvorsen - President
Kurt Leistikow - Vice President
Nick Newgard - Treasurer
Kent Anderson - Secretary
Roberta Bodensteiner
Mindy Fisher
Connie Johnson
Sam Lubs
Glenn Nelson
Jill Schulte

Over 25 people led the change

REPORTING STRUCTURE



The new organizational structure...explained in more detail in the following slides

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Mission:

Execute the business needs of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Team Lead: Pastor

Staffing:

- Office Manager - 40hrs/week
- Custodian - 15hrs/week
- IT - 8-12hrs/week

Responsibilities:

- Financial - Endowment, Memorial, Payroll
- Facilities
- HR
- IT
- Communication & Advertising, Social Media

WORSHIP TEAM

Mission:

Plan and carry out meaningful worship services

Team Lead: Pastor

Staffing:

- None

Responsibilities:

- Ushers
- Altar Guild
- Greeters
- Flowers/decorations
- PPT slides
- Baptisms
- Funerals
- Weddings

MUSIC TEAM

Mission:

Provide music leadership to the congregation

Team Lead: Pastor

Staffing:

- Choir Director – 6-10hrs/wk
- Traditional Music Lead – 8-14hrs/wk
- Contemporary Music Lead – 8-10hrs/wk

Responsibilities:

- All choirs
 - Chancel
 - Youth
- Christmas program
- Contemporary music
- Sunday school music
- VBS music
- Sound Tech

YOUTH & EDUCATION TEAM

Mission:

Provide lifelong learning opportunities to the congregation, visitors, and community

Team Lead:

Youth & Education Director

Staffing:

- Youth & Education Director – 20-30hrs/week

Responsibilities:

- Youth
 - Sunday School
 - VBS
 - Confirmation
 - Youth activities/trips
 - Nursery
 - Cradle roll
- Adult
 - Bible study
- Ongoing education

FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH TEAM

Mission:

Organize fellowship activities within and outside the walls of BLC

Team Lead:

Fellowship & Outreach Director

Staffing:

- Fellowship & Outreach Director – 15-20hrs/week

Responsibilities:

- External
 - Nursing home
 - Collaboration with other congregations
 - UNI outreach/recruiting
 - Connect with college members
 - Community meals
- Internal
 - Wednesday night meals
 - Ableskiver, Fall Harvest, etc.
 - Sunday coffee
 - Family activities
 - Summer picnic



PANDEMIC RESPONSE TEAM UPDATE

The Pandemic Response Team is pleased to announce that we will be holding our first drive in worship service on Sunday, July 5, at 10:00 am.

Here are some notes to help us in our worship together.

First, we have to stay in our cars – we do this in order to keep everyone safe and for everyone to be comfortable. Some folks might be okay talking. Others are glad to be able to come and be a part of worship but are in the high risk category. Please respect the team's desire to keep all people present at worship safe.

As you drive into Bethlehem parking lot– we would like everyone to enter by using the entrance near the bell.

There will be a parking lot attendant as you enter the lot who will be gloved and masked and hand you a bulletin. This attendant will point you forward toward the next attendant who will be directing you to your parking spot. To be noted, all the cars will be parked facing the church, but we will show you where to go.

We are asking that if you need to lower your windows, you wear a mask and if you do not want to wear a mask, then please keep your windows up. If your vehicle does not have windows (motorcycle, open jeeps, etc) then please bring a mask with you to wear while on the lot. – Please understand that we are taking this step in order that we do not jeopardize the safety of those gathered and in order not to jeopardize our ability to be gathered in this manner. We want our community to be able to commend our actions not condemn us.

While you are parked, turn your radio to **103.5 FM** – Keep in mind that your battery will drain if you do not keep your car running. We will have jumper cables on site should your car need it at the end of service.

Our plan is to conduct our service from the sidewalk and near the doors of the church.

At the end of the service, please stay in your parking spot until you are dismissed by the parking lot attendants. We want the drive in and the drive out to be very easy and smooth so please be patient and we will get you in and out of the lot.

We will be taking offering after church as you exit the lot, if you wish. The parking lot attendant will be able to take your offering as you are leaving Bethlehem. Keep in mind that you can always give an offering by mailing your check to Bethlehem, our address is – 4000 Hudson Road or give online at <http://www.bethlehemcf.org/#/welcome/online-giving>

The services on Sunday will be services of the Word. It is not our desire to make people uncomfortable at this first service. We want everyone in our ministry to be able to attend and be encouraged and we understand that there will be members who for their own personal reasons deem it not the right time to commune. For that reason and others, we are offering communion both on zoom or in person in small groups at this time. Please let Pastor know if you would like communion brought to you. We will, once we have the drive- in service bugs worked out, have communion at drive- in worship. This is just one step on the journey of gathering back together again.

Please know that online worship will continue as it has been for those who are not comfortable or not able to gather in person.

If you have any questions or concerns about drive-in worship, please call the church office at 319-266-3541.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Bethlehem's Pandemic Response Team: Glenn Nelson, Kevin Newgard, Becky Chittendon, Helen Pearce, Kent Anderson, Amber Halvorsen, Butch Naber, and Pastor Amy

Drive-in worship begins July 5!
For more info, look inside this newsletter!

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN PERSON

Drive-In Worship in the Bethlehem parking lot on Sundays at 10:00 am beginning on July 5.

WHAT'S HAPPENING ONLINE

Daily:

Daily Bread scripture reading and reflection by
Pastor Amy on YouTube and Facebook

Wednesday:

Coffee with the Pastor 10:00 am on Zoom

Sunday:

Worship & Sunday School Opening posted on
YouTube and Facebook

Coffee Fellowship Hour 9:30am on Zoom

Our Pastor

Rev. Amy Eisenmann
(218) 290-3982 cell phone
(319) 266-3541 Church Office
pastoramy@bethlehemcf.net

Our website:

www.bethlehemcf.org

Our YouTube Channel:

Bethlehem Lutheran CF

Our Facebook page:

**[www.facebook.com/
Bethlehem-Lutheran-Church-
ELCA-451552121584266](https://www.facebook.com/Bethlehem-Lutheran-Church-ELCA-451552121584266)**