

The Star

Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church



Through God's abundant love we invite, welcome, and serve as a light in the world.

EPIPHANY

January
2025

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Bethlehem
Lutheran Church



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Faith is often compared to a journey. Many sermon series take listeners through the Advent Journey or the Lenten Journey--probably because the stories of Christmas and Easter involve journeys like those of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, the magi following the star (which we celebrate every year on the Sunday closest to January 6), then Mary and Joseph and Jesus' flight to Egypt, and then we move quickly to Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and the cross. Though the characters on these journeys and their destinations change, one thing is common: the path is never straight and narrow. There are twists and turns, obstacles and obstinate people. The faith of the sojourner's is tested and God's faithfulness prevails. As we wrap up the holiday series *Words for the Beginning*, I invite you to hear and pray with the words of Rev. Sarah Speed (right).



Field Notes

Poem by Rev. Sarah A. Speed

A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

With tears in your eyes,
you name all the bumps
and zigzags your life has taken.
With clenched teeth
and a hummingbird pulse,
you wake up
and wonder—how did I get here?
In the last 40 days of
desert wandering, you say
you haven't heard God's voice once.
You say you miss when God was close,
when God used to sing the harmony line.
So you yell at the sky,
begging God to drop a pin,
to name the road,
to draw you a map.
You lament the way this life isn't easy.
You ask me—was the road ever straight and narrow,
or was that all a lie?
But then you crest the mountain,
and I don't hear from you for a while,
because God was growing
in the lilac field
on the other side of the hill.
God was scattered
among the pebbles
of the road you never planned to take.
Isn't it amazing, you say,
there are a million roads home
and God walks every single one of them.

Peace,

Rev KJC

From the Desk of the Faith Formation

Director, Gary: Our Word/Theme for the year is “Serve” and it represents our mission statement of who we are as a congregation.

(Serve) Matthew 25:35–40 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

Romans 12:10–39 Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.

1Peter 4:10–11 Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

Children’s Sunday School

will be on January 12, 19 and 26. We will start at 9:15 a.m. each week in the south Sunday School room. The lessons will be Jesus is the Word, Jesus Baptism, Wedding at Cana, Jesus goes to Nazareth.

Confirmation 2024–25

will meet on January 12 and 26. We are learning about World Religions this year and we will dive into other faith communities and learn what they are about. January we will be studying the Islam religion.

Family/Traditions Sunday’s

will meet on January 5 at 11:00 a.m. to play Minute to Win It games. We will have lunch together and build our teams to compete in the games.

High School Youth Group

will meet on January 19 from 4:00-6:00 p.m. We will meet for fellowship, faith conversations and about our 2025 July summer mission trip. We will have snacks, games and have a great time in discussions. ALL high school youth are invited.

The 2024–25 year Ministry Calendar of Events

is located on the wall next to the youth room. Please see it for information of dates and times of activities.

High School Mission Trip

Our High School youth will be going to Elkhorn, Nebraska for their summer mission trip in July. They will help rebuild the community after the 2024 tornados; serving and representing BLC in our world. The high school youth will be doing two major fundraisers: March 4 as a Shrove pancake supper and April 13 as a Palm Sunday breakfast. Please mark your calendars for these dates.



Month of November

Income: \$ 37,477.25
Expenses: \$ 36,819.14
Net: \$ 658.11

YTD to Date

Income: \$ 373,201.49
Expenses: \$ 401,907.84
Net: \$ -28,706.35

Financial Summary Reports Presented to Council are Available: Contact Greg S.

(treasurer@bethlehem-lutheran.net) for more information or with questions or suggestions. Printed copies of all the reports are available for review in the Fireside Room library.

Multiple Giving Options for BLC

We have several options for making donations:

- To make an online web donation (one time or recurring), go to the Donate web page and click on the Online Giving icon to access our secure giving page and then follow the instructions. Detailed instructions are also available on the website.
- For recurring donations, another option is to download the BLC Vanco Enrollment form or get a copy from the BLC Office, complete and sign, and return with a voided check to the BLC office with Attention: Financial Secretary. The financial secretary will set up an account for you.
- Mail or drop off a check or cash to the BLC office (Attention: Financial Secretary, 1000 West 15th Avenue, Longmont, CO, 80501).

Online giving lets you go to our website at any time 24/7 to set up an automatic donation plan, change your donation plan, make a one-time donation, or view your online donation history.

If you have any questions about either our giving or pledging options, please contact Jenny, our financial secretary (financialsec@bethlehem-lutheran.net, 303-651-6226).

Worship

Always Looking for Volunteers!

Help with worship! There are many positions available such as assisting minister, communion server, greeter.... Just reach out to Sabrina at worshipchair@bethlehem-lutheran.net or the church office. Or find the sign-up link online at <https://bethlehem-lutheran.net/worship/#volunteer>

BLC Nursery

Open 10:10–11:30 a.m. Ages from birth to 3 years. If you would like to bring your little one, there will be two volunteers each Sunday. We will be located in the preschool area. Please contact Sabrina Lee or Sue Smith if you have any questions. Also, if you would like to volunteer and rock a baby for a service, talk with Sue Smith. Thanks!

Worship

Epiphany - Sunday, January 5, 2025, 9:15 a.m.

Too often, we've been told that a successful life is a linear one. But in reality, our lives unfold with many unexpected twists and turns. The Magi follow a star, embarking on a long journey in a foreign land in order to honor the newborn Christ. Instead of returning to Herod as commanded, they trust their dreams and go home by another way. Their road isn't straight, but God "makes a way in the wilderness" (Isaiah 43:19) as they follow their intuition and diverge from the expected path.

Readings: Isaiah 43:16-21, Matthew 2:1-12

Baptism of the Lord

Sunday, January 12

Today's festival rejoices in God's blessings. We recall and celebrate our adoption as God's children, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the promised company of almighty God when we "pass through the waters . . . the rivers . . . fire." On this day the heavens open again for this assembly, and we receive the gift of God's Beloved, Jesus, in bread and wine.

Second Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday, January 19

The Sundays after Epiphany continue to celebrate the revelation of God's glory to us as it was made known to the magi and to those on Jordan's banks at Jesus' baptism—today using wedding imagery. Our God rejoices over God's people as those being married rejoice over one another. By the power of the Spirit there are gifts galore for everyone. In Christ Jesus the best wine is saved for last. Taste and see.

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday, January 26

God's glory is revealed in the reading of scripture. People stand at attention. People weep. People prostrate themselves in prayer. The unity of the church is another reflection of God's glory. Most gloriously, the promises of God are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Gather round. Listen up. Glimpse the glory of God.

January Events

- ***Church office closed until January 2***
- Worship Service: Sundays, 8:00 a.m. & 10:15 a.m.
- Sunday School: Sundays, 9:15 a.m.
- Manna Bible Study: Mondays, 9:00 a.m.
- Table Talk: Wednesdays, 12:00 p.m.
- BLC Quilters Group: Thursdays, 9:00 a.m.
- Men's Group (Promise Keepers): Saturdays, 8:00 a.m.
- First Friday: January 3, 6:00 p.m.
- Men's Group (LMM): January 4, 9:00 a.m.
- Worship Service: January 5, 9:15 a.m.
- Nicaragua Project Board Meeting, January 5, 10:30 a.m.
- Family Traditions Sunday: January 5, 11:00 a.m.
- BLC/ LOC Joint Meeting: January 8, 10:30 a.m.
- Book Club: January 9, 9:00 a.m.
- 11th Hour Project: January 11, 11:00 a.m.
- Music Ambassadors: January 12, 11:30 a.m.
- Confirmation: January 12, 11:45 a.m.
- Brewsday: January 14, 8:00 a.m.
- Naomi Circle: January 14, 9:15 a.m.
- Council Meeting: January 14, 7:00 a.m.
- Safety Team Meeting: January 16, 7:00 p.m.
- High School Youth Group: January 19, 4:00 p.m.
- Prayer Shawl: January 21, 10:00 a.m.
- Evangelism Meeting: January 21, 6:00 p.m.
- Missions/ Service Meeting: January 26, 11:30 a.m.
- Confirmation: January 26, 11:45 a.m.
- Brewsday: January 28, 8:00 a.m.
- Men's Group (LMM): February 1, 9:00 a.m.

First Friday

will be **January 3** at 6:00 p.m. It will be at Wanda and Gene Schnabel home. Please bring an appetizer and beverage to share. All are welcome to attend, no RSVP needed. For questions call Shirley K.

Naomi Circle

will meet in the Youth Room and on Zoom Tuesday, **January 14**, from 9:15-11:00 a.m. Our membership is open to all who are interested in joining us. Please contact Linda H. (holstell@outlook.com) or Sue S. (suesmith512@msn.com) for further information. membership is open to all who are interested.

Bethlehem Book Club

Bethlehem Book Club: Start 2025 with a new resolution to read and share! Everyone is invited to our monthly book club. We meet on Zoom at 9:00 a.m. on the second Thursday of the month. At our **January 9** meeting we will discuss *Reading Genesis* by Marilynne Robinson. February 13 we will be discussing *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah. If you would like to receive book club emails and zoom links, email Mary Jane at mjvoogt2003@yhoo.com to be put on the list.

Manna Bible Study

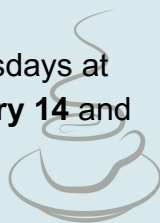
We meet each **Monday morning** at 9:00 a.m. for discussion and would love to have you join us. Please contact Phyllis W. (pkwright1360@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

Quilting Group

We meet on **Thursday mornings** at 9:00 a.m. and would love to see you there! You don't need any experience. Join us for an enjoyable morning and perhaps to learn something new!

Brewsday Mornings

meet on the 2nd Tuesdays at BLC and 4th Tuesdays at a local establishment. Join us at BLC on **January 14** and on **January 28** at TBD.



First Friday

Friday, January 3, 6:00 p.m.

Ambassadors at the Atria

Sunday, January 12, 11:30 a.m.

Naomi Circle

Tuesday, January 14, 9:15 a.m.

Book Club

Thursday, January 9, 9:00 a.m.

Prayer Shawl

Tuesday, January 21, 10:00 a.m.

Manna Bible Study

Every Monday, 9:00 a.m.

Table Talk

Wednesdays, 12:00 p.m.

Quilting Group

Every Thursday, 9:00 a.m.

Men's Group (LMM)

Saturday, January 4 9:00 a.m.

Men's Group (LMM)

Men's Group (LMM) will meet on Saturday, **January 4** at 9:00 a.m. We invite all men to participate in this ministry. We will model our group after the Lutheran Men in Mission group that is formed nationwide in the Lutheran church. We will have breakfast burritos (courtesy of Howard Wirth) and cinnamon rolls, followed by fellowship time with a short devotion. We look forward to seeing everyone. Please let Gary know if you are interested so that we have enough food for breakfast.

Benevolence Opportunities

Every year, Bethlehem includes various ministries and service programs as recipients of benevolence in the annual budget. This year, because of a budget deficit, we are unable to make the following disbursements:

- Lutheran Campus Ministry \$250; Habitat for Humanity \$500, New Beginnings \$500; Nicaragua \$500; Growing Gardens \$250.

As you consider your gifts this year, please remember Bethlehem and these partners in service. Donations to them can be made in envelopes clearly marked by you for a donation to the partner you are supporting and either placed in the offering or sent to Bethlehem.

Bake Sale Report!

The Nicaragua Project wishes to express its profound gratitude on behalf of the children in our Children's Project and others in the surrounding barrio. More than 20 people baked for the sale and numerous congregants donated generously at the "Bake a Treat, Put Shoes on a Kid's Feet" bake sale. A total of \$1,248 was raised. Not only will that provide shoes for approximately 83 children, when the shoes are outgrown, they will be passed on to others.

Our four members going to Nicaragua and our project in February will have the joy of delivering them and seeing the broad smiles on the children's and their parents' faces. We will bring back pictures!

Thank You Thrivent Financial

Thanks to BLC members for leading and Thrivent Financial for providing funds for Thrivent Actions Teams. In 2024 we know of 22 Action Teams which means several of our projects and fundraisers benefited from this to the amount of \$4,500. Through Thrivent Action Teams, Thrivent provided numerous grants of \$250 which helped fund: four OUR Center lunches; supplies for the Little Pantry; supplies for God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday; Share the Grace, funding for activities of the Musical Freedom program; food and toiletries for the OUR Center drive; advertising and fundraiser supplies for Casa de Paz, New Beginnings Prison Ministry, the ReEntry Initiative, the Nicaragua Project, Hope for the Holidays, St Patrick's Dinner. These are all funds outside of budgeted funds from BLC —so thank you very much Thrivent Financial!

If you are a Thrivent member and would like to sponsor an Action Team in 2025, please contact Mark H holstemarka@outlook.com or Cathy G (missions@bethlehem-lutheran.net for more information on how to use this wonderful resource for fundraisers, education opportunities, and service projects. Mark H holstemarka@outlook.com is happy to provide information and application examples.

Also, a reminder to Thrivent members to be sure and designate your 2024 Thrivent Choice dollars before the March 31, 2025, deadline. These can be designated to any non-profit organization of your choice, including Bethlehem Lutheran.

Habitat Build Days in 2025

They are all Saturdays! February 22, April 26, June 28, August 30, October 25, December 6.

Please **mark your calendars** and save the dates as there will be potentially some 40 homes to build next year!! Thank you for all who helped in 2024.

To Serve

Music Ambassadors

Singing at the Atria on the second Sunday of each month at 11:30 a.m. We invite everyone to join us – if you can or can't sing, young or old. The residents appreciate and enjoy the visits. We'll sing next on Sunday, January 12!

High School Mission Trip

Our High School youth will be going to Elkhorn, Nebraska for their summer mission trip in July. They will help rebuild the community after the 2024 tornados; serving and representing BLC in our world. The high school youth will be doing two major fundraisers: March 4 as a Shrove pancake supper and April 13 as a Palm Sunday breakfast. Please mark your calendars for these dates.

Hope for the Holidays wrap!

Thank you all again for helping with the Global Refuge drive to get greetings of hope and support to detained persons. Below is the Global Refuge thank you and summary:

In this time of uncertainty for our immigrant neighbors, sending messages of hope has never been more important. Each holiday season, we invite our supporters to come together and lift the spirits of refugees and immigrants across the United States. Through our Hope for the Holidays program, individuals from all corners of the country have joined in spreading warmth, love, and encouragement.

Thanks to the kindness of over 300 communities, more than 10,000 holiday cards have been written, reminding our newest neighbors that they are not forgotten. These heartfelt messages bring comfort to those who need it most.

A special thank you to everyone who participated in this year's campaign—your support makes all the difference.

Property

Solar Project

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Solar Project. You have exceed the goal with a total of \$74,880.

Thank you to the Solar Project Team for all the hard work on researching the project and funding and for the fund raising. Without your foresight and perseverance we would not be seeing this become a reality. On Tuesday, December 17 we signed the contract for all the work to begin! The estimated go live date is early May.

Bethlehem Council

Member Milestones

Birthdays

Jan 1 Gina Alexander
Jan 1 Alisha James
Jan 1 Emily Dawson
Jan 2 Zephyr Lautenschlager
Jan 3 Bonnie Mason
Jan 3 Racheal Goodman
Jan 5 Heather Barnhouse
Jan 7 Frances Rhoades
Jan 7 Bob Urbach
Jan 9 Sarah Wagner
Jan 10 Mike Davis
Jan 11 Perrie Sanders
Jan 11 Ryan Kragerud
Jan 11 Alex Hebbert
Jan 12 Nancy Habegger
Jan 13 Colten Corner
Jan 14 Justin Woodley
Jan 15 Molly Summers-Stiver
Jan 16 Emily Kunselman
Jan 17 Mark Abromski
Jan 19 Mark Herbst
Jan 19 Grace Demmel
Jan 19 Callie Bowman
Jan 19 Emily Dickhans
Jan 20 Betty Culbertson
Jan 20 Mendy Goodman
Jan 21 Margot Hoffmeyer
Jan 21 Lily Romaszewski
Jan 22 Marcella Myers
Jan 22 Patty Fagler
Jan 24 Connie Nelson
Jan 24 Morgan Dimmitt
Jan 24 Hannah Thompson
Jan 26 Dean Mickelson
Jan 27 Alex Dickhans
Jan 29 Steven Byrne
Jan 31 Dennis Bloemker

Anniversaries

Jan 3 Mark & Linda Holste (49)
Jan 5 Robin & Frank Lee (35)
Jan 5 Sandy & John Frazer (23)
Jan 7 Dennis & Marcy Smith (58)
Jan 22 Howard & Sharon Wirth (59)

Keep those in your prayers

Members: Members: Virginia P., Sandy F., Ken C., Matt J., Yvonne A., Irene R., Doris H., Jenny K., Gerry C., Bob D., Patty F., Dave B., Irene M., Doris C., Jill H., Nancy H., Jamie A., Florence M., Coqui S., Paul P., Darlene B., Jan M., Kristal H., Jeremy G.



Crossroads School

January 22, 2025
4pm – 7pm

Parkway
FOOD HALL
700 Ken Pratt Blvd # 200, Longmont, CO 80501

*Mention Crossroads to the vendor and
Crossroads receives 20%*

JANUARY
FOOD and FELLOWSHIP

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
1000 15th Avenue
Longmont, CO 80501

Return service requested

Worship Services

Sundays
8:00 a.m. & 10:15 a.m.

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Bethlehem Staff

Pastor Katie Chullino - pastor@bethlehem-lutheran.net
Nancy Tiff, Hospitality Coordinator - nancy@bethlehem-lutheran.net
Gary Knutson, Faith Formation Director - faithformation@bethlehem-lutheran.net
Karen Haag, Bookkeeper - bookkeeper@bethlehem-lutheran.net
Tiffany Beisner, Office Administrator - admin@bethlehem-lutheran.net
Aaron Jurkovich, Webmaster - webmaster@bethlehem-lutheran.net
Amanda Bueschen, Director of Cornerstone Preschool -
cornerstone_director@bethlehem-lutheran.net