

From the Pastor

It's hard to believe that we are now entering the Advent/Christmas season. And the situation with the Coronavirus is more intense than ever. But still, there is good reason to hope, as drug companies announce the success rate of their Covid vaccines. We just need to manage to stay alive and healthy until April perhaps, when these vaccines will be more widely available.

So how do we hang in there for the time-being? How do we find reason for joy as we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christ child? How do we come to grips with the fact that we cannot think of experiencing our beloved Christmas celebrations in church, with children's Christmas programs, the choir Christmas cantata, singing our favorite carols in church on Christmas Eve, and lighting candles while we sing Silent Night?

My colleague, Pastor Zach Shipman from Crosby was reflecting on how things will be different this year, and I found his thoughts helpful in seeing things in a new way. Instead of thinking about loss and the things that cannot be, Pastor Zach reflects, what if we think about online Christmas Eve worship as an opportunity to relate to that first Christmas. Our uncomfortable experience of not being where we want to be, connects closely with the experience of Mary and Joseph not getting to be where they wanted to be – disrupted and displaced in their lives by a census requiring them to travel late in Mary's pregnancy. Our dismay at realizing there is not room for us to gather together safely in church for Christmas, reflects the dismay of Mary and Joseph as they realized there was no room in Bethlehem for Mary to safely have her baby. The first Christmas Eve was not all sweet romance and candle-light, but took place in a dark and smelly stable.

Mary and Joseph were not where they wanted to be, gathered with family or friends. With travel or visiting restrictions, we may be experiencing separation from our family or friends. And yet as we reflect on these things, we can also recognize the fact that Jesus is still with us. Christ is present not just in church, but in our homes. He is present in the homes of our loved ones far away from us. He is present in each room of an assisted living center and on the Covid floors of the hospitals and in each ICU room.

That does not mean that we can't shed tears about our situation. We don't have to keep up a cheery façade at all times. We can admit and acknowledge

that we are not doing okay. Even when we are not where we want to be, Christ is here where we are. It was for such a time as this that Christ entered into our world, to be God with us. His light still shines in our darkness, even though things are not the same this Christmas.

In Christ,
Pastor Janet

Pastor Janet's Joke of the Month

Actual children's versions of Christmas Carols:

"...sleep in heavenly peas";

"Joy to the world, the Savior rains";

"This is he whom Sears of old...";

"Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plane";

"While shepherds washed their socks by night

Who is the Real Virgin?

A ten-year-old, under the tutelage of her grandmother, was becoming quite knowledgeable about the Bible. Then one day she floored her grandmother by asking, "Which virgin was the mother of Jesus? The virgin Mary or the King James Virgin?"

God's Not Deaf

Two young boys were spending the night at their grandparents' house the week before Christmas. At bedtime, the two boys knelt beside their beds to say their prayers. The younger one began praying at the top of his lungs:

"I PRAY FOR A NEW BICYCLE..."

"I PRAY FOR A NEW X-BOX..."

His older brother leaned over, nudged him and said, "Why are you shouting? God isn't deaf." to which the little brother replied, "No, but Grandma is!"



From the Bethany Staff

Pastor Janet, Pastor Gerald,
Pastor Intern Dave Myers, Kari Files,
Nadine Holmly, Jackie Hebor,
Patti Abrahamson, Tim Lindsey,
Donna Randash, Shelley Duchscherer,
Jacob Thrailkill.



Poinsettias for Christmas Worship

Since we are not having in person Christmas worship, there is not a big push for Poinsettias. If you would still like to drop one off, you are welcome to do so. You are welcome to pick them back up during office hours the following week. Also, if you would like your Poinsettia to be in memory of someone please let the office know by December 18th.

Mary's Circle
December 15th @ 9:30



**Advent
Worship**
Will be streamed online,
Dec 2, 9, & 16 at 7:00pm.
www.bethanylutheran.tv or
Bethany Lutheran Facebook
page

Stewardship of Generosity Financial Update

We are very excited to report that as of today we have received 123 Statements of Intent. That leaves us only 2 short of our challenge of 125. As soon as we hit this number it will unlock the \$10,000 challenge grant, generously offered by an anonymous Bethany member. Will you be the one to put us over? You can email your intent to bethanypatti@hotmail.com

Further good news is that of the responses received, you have increased your intent by \$56,000 for 2021. A big thanks to all of you for your generosity and support of Bethany's ongoing ministry.

With the disruptions of Covid, we still have some catch-up to do for 2020. Pledge donations are about \$30,000 behind, but past experience has shown that we usually have an excellent December. You are encouraged to catch up as you are able.

Bethany has been fortunate this year to receive some money from the ND Economic Resiliency Grant (ERG) to make some Covid improvements to the church and are now waiting to make sure our receipts are approved for the full forgiveness of the grant. Bethany was also fortunate to have some help from the Federal Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) which helped pay wages & health for two-three months. ERG & PPP only allow their dollars to be spent for the requests submitted, not for any other items.

The staff has been keeping spending in check with mostly Covid related items and necessities. But, our biggest prayer currently is for all to stay healthy in this year & 2021.

LYO December Schedule

December 2-Name that Tune
December 9-Pinterest Power
December 16- Christmas Extravaganza
No LYO December 23 & 30th. Merry Christmas!! Happy New Year!!!

November was a very busy month for our youth even though things were done a different way than how they would have been done. We had a baking night, where supplies were dropped off at the Teens homes so that we could bake cakes together as well as supplies for other projects that we did in November.

Also, the Western North Dakota LYO gathering was attended via zoom. Our youth and Leaders were education on Youth Ministry. Krista Perimeter finished her second year as the Turtle Mountain Representative of this board, and Phoebe Thompson was elected to take that office for two years. Grady Duchscherer has one more year left of this term as Treasurer. Grady was also selected to take part in a National ELCA Youth Summit. This is something he and the incoming President of the LYO Board would have attended in person somewhere, but they were able to participate via zoom. Grady did say it was educational, and that he is looking forward to telling his Grandkids someday that he was the ELCA National Youth Summit Bingo Champion.

We asked for continued prayers for all! Stay Safe!



Virtual Giving Tree

The Ministry of Care will be taking an offering for the Giving Tree. Please send your donations into the office with a note saying it is for the giving tree by December 14th. Your gift will help with local concerns.

November Offering

11/01	\$1693
11/08	\$7954.
11/15	\$4279.
11/22	\$4533.
11/29	?
Automatic & Online Giving	\$9728.
Thrivent Choice	\$176.

November Ministerial Acts

Funerals: Arnold Olander, James Legg, Adeline Mueller

Miriam Bible Study
Dec 10 @ 2:00pm



If you would like to have your newsletter emailed to you instead of being mailed please let the church office know.
Thank you!



Minot Area ELCA Lutheran Churches
Virtual Blue Christmas
December 21, 7:00 PM (or anytime after)
www.bethanylutheran.tv or
Bethany Lutheran Minot Facebook page

Even in normal years, we may find ourselves feeling sad at Christmas-time. The Coronavirus pandemic has multiplied and complicated all the normal emotions leading up to Christmas Eve. Join us online for an area-wide Lutheran Blue Christmas, as we reflect on the light and hope that the Christ-child brings into our world.

'Tis the Season for Giving

In many ways, we honor the birth of the Christ child – God’s gift to us – by sharing our own blessings in gifts to others. If you are looking for some meaningful ways to give, here are some possibilities:

***The Bethany Lutheran Foundation 215**
3rd Ave SE, Minot ND 58701

***Luther Seminary – 2481 Como Ave, St. Paul**
MN 55108

***Ann Carlsen Center for Children – 301**
7th Ave NW, Jamestown ND 58501

Morning Circle will meet
Sunday of Dec. 13th @
9:30am



Fall 2020 Memorials:

In Memory of **Charles & Mary Bovee**
Technology from their family.

In Memory of **Jean Rollman**
Music from Bill & Bev Jensen.

In Memory of **Shirley DeFeyer**
Sunday School from Bill & Bev Jensen.

Bethany Foundation Memorials:

In Memory of **Orlan & Rosella Tollefson** from
Kathlean Wheeler



DO U AMAZON???

**As you are doing your holiday shopping
please consider**

using [amazon.smile.com](https://smile.amazon.com) This is a secure website that is a part of Amazon but donates 0.5% of your purchase back to Bethany Lutheran Church. The link is on our Bethany Facebook page or enter the link:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/45-0248857>



**DECEMBER CAUSE OF THE
MONTH**

Global Barnyard



**Bethany Birthdays!
December:**

- 1st –Bernard Gangl, Billy Schindler, Kevin Seehafer
- 2nd –Emily Deforest, David Walter
- 4th –Haili Duchscherer, Carter Larson, Journey Larson, Kirk Nybakken, Erna Pederson, Brooks Schafer
- 5th –Tyler Schindler, Stefanie Stalheim, Aiden Sult
- 6th – Jodi Pederson, Justin Westmeyer
- 7th –Jonathan Mathistad
- 8th –Conner Armstrog, Ryan Van Dyke
- 9th –Nancy Hoiland
- 10th –Debra Love, Samantha Rasmusson, Lavonne Sandvol, Betty Werre
- 11th –David Alvin, Caleb Grindy
- 12th –Teresa Erie, Ashley Johnson
- 13th –Luca Bourquin, Marcheta Holmly, Trent Westmeyer
- 14th –Deloris Lee, Conley Post, David Schafer
- 16th –Peter Mathistad, Shawn Wallace
- 17th –Faye Norby, Mary Nordmark
- 18th –Phoebe Thompson
- 19th –Jessie Casey, Brendon Walker
- 20th –Bethany Egeberg, Derek Kuhnenn, Brianna Walker
- 21st –Sidney Coffin, Scott Hodenfield, Holli Larson, Murrel Price
- 23rd –John Bearman, Mark Tollefson
- 24th –Brian Berg, Mollie Muus
- 25th –Ruth Moe
- 26th –Ashlyn Dopp
- 27th –Cameron Hummel, Linda Walker
- 28th –Sharon Grondahl, Tracey Schuster
- 30th –Marilyn Bigwood, Alexa Dopp, Tessa Nesheim
- 31st –Sheldon Hill, Carol Lucier, Shirley Price, Jacob Thrailkill

Also, Happy Birthday to anyone whose name is not on the list. If your name is not on the list then we don't have it, so please call the office with it. Thank you!

Congratulations on your Confirmation!

2020 Bethany Confirmands

Student	Parents
*Ariana Diaz	Lance & Angela Gehring
Alexa Dopp	Justin & Dena Dopp
Breya Egeberg	Steve & Bethany Egeberg
Josceline Fix	Margaret Fix & Milton Webb
Conner Bower	Donovan Bower & Shellie Bower
Brody Nelson	Randy & Heather Nelson
Ryker Pederson	Steve & Jodi Pederson
Chance Thompson	Rick & Christine Thompson

*To be Confirmed at a later date



2020 BIBLE PRESENTATION

The BLCW presented the Kindergarten and 3rd Graders Bibles.

Kindergarten Children: Owen Evanoff, Peyton Locken, Mason Melton, Ender Nelson, Rylan Otto, Dawsyn Williams, Averie Zietz.

3rd Grade: Ryne Bachmeier, Makenzie Chilson, Quade Everson, Carlie Kuhnenn, Berit Meinert, Faith Miltenberger.



Due to covid-19, we are NOT taking any magazines!

Christmas Worship Planning

After participating in an online Zoom session with our synod Bishop Craig Schweitzer and fellow colleagues across the synod, it is becoming clear that we cannot safely hold in-person Christmas Eve worship services. While this causes a great deal of sadness, it is even more sad that we have already been dealing with Covid-related deaths as well as serious illness of Bethany members. We plan to celebrate instead with a special online worship that can be watched Christmas Eve and anytime after. We will also offer a weekly Advent service to be streamed on Wednesday evenings in December. And the Minot area ELCA pastors are preparing a joint Blue Christmas worship to be shown online on Dec. 21, the longest night of the year – as a show of support and solidarity with one another in our community.

There is a possibility, depending on weather, that we could do a short 20-minute parking lot carol sing earlier on Christmas Eve, perhaps around 5:00 PM. We will have more information as we get closer. As of this printing, we still plan to continue with in-person worship on Sunday mornings – 8:30 AM upstairs, and 10:30 AM in the Fellowship Room.

Education News

Because of the pandemic, our church school Christmas program is different from years past. This year, there are two programs, one for the 3-year-olds thru 2nd grade and one for the 3rd thru 5th grade. Since we are limited to the number of people we can have in the church, we will video each program and upload it to Facebook and our website so family members and friends can watch. In addition, each child will receive a Christmas gift bag.

December 2 @ 6pm: 3-year-olds thru 2nd grade program. Parents, please have your child in the church activity room by **5:45pm**.

December 16 @ 6pm: 3rd thru 5th grade program. Parents, please have your child in the church activity room by **5:30pm**.

We hope and pray that each of you will have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

In Christ,

Pastor-Intern Dave

**Bethany Lutheran Church Council Monthly
Minutes
11 November 2020**

PRESENT: Allen Hirzel, Jacob Jenkins, Colton Bourquin, Judy Anderson, Brian Messmer, Pastor Intern David Myers, Shanon Polsfut, Patti Abrahamson, Jean Meiers, Pastor Gerald Roise, Pastor Janet Hernes Mathistad, George Walker, Cleo Berven, Deb Lee, Ken Stroklund.

EXCUSED: Kolette Ostlund, John Bearman, Jorn Brose, Brian Berg.

DEVOTIONS: Colton shared devotions.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER President Allen Hirzel.

Staff Reports

PASTORS REPORT: Pastor Janet: Looking for Gratitude pictures for Thanksgiving. Last year's confirmation class was recently confirmed with seven of the eight able to be in attendance. One had a family emergency and will be confirmed at a later date. The pastors will be on an all-day virtual ELCA Boundary Workshop tomorrow.

Pastor Gerald: Will be back in the office starting the 16th of November till at least the end of the year.

Pastor Intern Dave: He finished up his last formal class last Sunday. Deering had an individual test positive for the virus. Although the person hadn't been at the church for a couple weeks, they decided to close for a couple weeks just to be safe.

YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD: No report.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Jean Meiers moved to approve. Judy Anderson seconded. Approved.

TREASURERS REPORT: Donations are still down, hopefully they will pick back up as we head to the end of the calendar year. The Staff is doing a good job in holding down expenses.

Deb Lee moved to approve. Jean Meiers seconded. Approved

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE TEAMS

WORSHIP/ALTER/MUSIC: Several other Minot Lutheran churches have suspended in person attendance. We will continue as we've been for the time being with 8:30 AM in the Sanctuary, and 10:30 AM in the Fellowship Room. Thanksgiving Eve Service will be streamed.

PARISH EDUCATION: No report.

CONFIRMATION: See earlier comments. We will not have in-person Confirmation classes in December but a limited number of students will be able to take part in the Backpack Buddies service project, Dec. 9.

MINISTRY OF CARE/LOCAL MISSIONS: No Report.

FAITH & CARE: No report.

LIBRARY: No Report.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT: Most of the COVID-19 building upgrades have been completed. The Air Exchanger in the Sanctuary still needs to be installed. Once it is fully functional, it will be able to completely replace all the air in the Sanctuary in about 4 hours. The Air Purifier will help clean the air in the meantime.

FOUNDATION: No Report.

STAFF SUPPORT: No Report.

HOSTFEST PROJECT: No Report.

STEWARDSHIP: We have received 90 intent cards back so far. Well on our way to getting enough for the \$10,000 challenge grant. Only 5 of the 15 council members have turned theirs in. We need to set the example.

GLOBAL MISSIONS: No Report.

BLCW: Kathy Myers is working on the details for a possible project.

BREAKFAST BOYS: No report.

MEMORIAL: No requests since last month but we have received some memorials.

OLD BUSINESS

Covid-19 Update: Consensus is to continue in person worship protocol as it seems to be going OK.

ERG & PPP Status: The PPP Promissory Note has been forgiven in the amount of \$79,400. Patti is still working on getting all the documents scanned and submitted for the ERG grant.

Copier: We received two quotes for copiers from ABM and Gaffaney's. It was determined that buying the copier outright from ABM with a service contract was cheaper than leasing it. \$9000 plus \$762 annual Service Contract.

Deb Lee moved to approve. Jean Meiers seconded. Approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Christmas Services: Pastor Janet brought up some Christmas ideas for how Christmas services may look. Possibly have one service with the service streamed online and downstairs at the same time as the service is going on upstairs. Jacob brought up that maybe we could do a Candlelight Service in the parking lot using our outdoor worship equipment. There will be a Zoom meeting with the Synod Bishop for further guidance. Pastor Janet led the closing prayer. Jean moved to adjourn. Judy seconded. Approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Stroklund – Bethany Council Secretary