

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



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
JULY - AUGUST 2025

Connecting our Story

The many ministries of Bethlehem touch the lives of many and yet we often don't witness the impact. **Connecting Our Story** is a new way that we will be sharing these stories through various channels. We'll send out these stories in a special email on occasional Thursday afternoons as well as have print versions available in the narthex.

These **Connecting Our Story** features will be gathered in a binder in the Narthex. If you have stories of how your life or the lives of others have been touched by BLC's ministries, please contact Teri Johnson, Director of Communications at tjohnson@BethlehemAberdeen.org



BURNING OF THE MORTGAGE

July 20th at 9:30 AM
at the Firepit
on the Remembrance Walkway

Ceremony



My Favorite
SCRIPTURE
and FAVORITE HYMN too!

Write down your favorite
scripture or hymn on the
Yellow Welcome Card



FOLLOW

M A T T H E W 1 9 : 2 1

FROM THE PASTOR

People of Bethlehem,

Recently a bumper sticker on a horse trailer caught my attention: “Do you follow Jesus this close?”

I imagine this question is intended to prompt people to ponder both their driving and their devotion. It is a question that fits well with our worship series: ***Dust: Follow Jesus Closely.***

In Jesus’ time there was a saying: “Be covered in the dust of your rabbi.” Disciples were to follow their teacher’s footsteps so closely that they’d be covered in the dust that the rabbi’s feet kicked up. This is a powerful image of a teacher’s influence on student’s lives.

Summer is often thought of as a break from school, and summer is not a vacation from following Jesus. When pondering Jesus’ teaching, we could look to his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) or his teaching in his hometown synagogue (Luke 4:16–19):

When [Jesus] came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Perhaps you have other “dust” of Jesus that shapes your life. Please share your favorites as we may include yours as part of our upcoming ***My Favorite Scripture*** series in August.

As the voices of many rabbis and leaders flood our ears, let’s follow Jesus closely enough to hear his teaching.

I look forward to listening to Jesus with you this summer and beyond!

Pastor Jeff



Vacation Bible School

What a wonderful week of VBS! June 2nd – 6th we had approximately 250 kids and 125 volunteers filling our building with excitement and learning! Our theme this year was ***True North: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World.***

Thank you for praying for us as we prepared and cared for these children. Thank you for all who volunteered their time. Thank you to all who

financially supported VBS either with your regular offering, a special gift to VBS, or by purchasing supplies from the donation board. **We sincerely appreciate each and every one of you!** We are already looking forward to next year's VBS: *Rainforest Falls: Exploring the Nature of God.*

***Thank you to everyone who brought donations during VBS
for the Aberdeen Area Humane Society!***

Registration for fall ministries is open on our website!

3 years old through 5th Grade

www.bethlehemaberdeen.org/teach/children-age-3-5th-grade

Route 67 (6th & 7th Grade) & Confirmation (8th, 9th & 10th Grade)

www.bethlehemaberdeen.org/teach/youth-6th-10th

Sunday and Wednesday School Volunteers Needed

As we begin to plan and prepare for Christian Education ministries this fall, we are in need of volunteers. We try to have team teachers for every classroom so you can alternate teaching and not have to be here each week. If you are interested in helping with Sunday or Wednesday School in any capacity or just want to learn more about the program, please contact Cyndi at 225-9740 or cbishop@bethlehemaberdeen.org

Do you have a middle or high school student who likes working with kids?

We'd love to have their assistance with Sunday and Wednesday School. Assistants can help kids with projects, get involved with music, calm anxious children, and help teach lessons if they are interested. If you have a youth in grades 6-12 who would like to help, have them chat with Cyndi to get on the list!

Celebrating First Communion



These students completed instruction about communion and the promise of forgiveness during the First Communion Class on June 11. They received their First Communion on Sunday, June 15 or Wednesday, June 18. Please hold them in prayer as they celebrate this milestone.

Anderson Braun
Deacon Braun
Carver Connolly
Kayson Connolly

Cameron Crabb
Miles Crawford
Weston Kettner
Alec Leidholt

Aryanna Lilly
Chesney Ravellette
Reagan Rhodes
Bennett Sanderson

Tyton Schuchhardt
Creightyn Vetter
Avery Wobst
Reagan Wobst

High School Youth Group

High School Youth Group is for all 9th -12th graders and is meeting in the summer. Each week we either engage in a Bible study, a service project or a volunteer opportunity both at the church and in the Aberdeen area community, and for fun and fellowship with other high schoolers. Youth group will meet on **Wednesdays from 7pm—9pm.**



Board Game Night: Yard Game Edition

Board game night will meet on **July 24th starting at 5:30pm in the Fellowship Hall.** Bring your own board game, or choose one of the many options that will be available. If the weather is nice, we may even do some outdoor yard games! You are also encouraged to bring puzzles or other board game-like games. All ages are welcome to come! All skill levels are welcome too! We have plenty of teachers who love helping new players learn games. Pizza will be provided. Water will also be provided, but you are welcome to bring your own beverage. If you arrive late or leave early, that's okay! If you would like more information about board game night, talk to Pastor Matt at mspoden@bethlehemabern.deen.org

Summer Reflections: Savoring the Sacred in the Everyday

Dear Friends in Christ,

June arrived in all its splendor - lush with green, alive with blossoms, and filled with the long, golden light of summer days. It invites us to breathe a little deeper, to walk a little slower, and to pause long enough to notice the beauty that has been quietly unfolding around us all along.

This is a season that nudges us to realign with what matters most. It's a gentle call to reflect on our values, to create space for rest and renewal, and to seek what gives our lives meaning. I encourage you to find a piece of scripture this month - just one verse or passage - and allow it to settle into your heart. Let it be your companion as the days unfold. Whether it's the poetry of the Psalms or the teachings of Jesus, dwell in the Word and see what God may be whispering to you in this season.

Thriving doesn't always come through grand gestures. Often, it's in the small, quiet joys: the scent of blossoms in the air, the warmth of the sun on your skin, a cup of coffee shared with a friend, or a spontaneous conversation with a neighbor. These are the "pluses" of life - those grace-filled moments that remind us of God's presence and goodness.

As you move through the summer days, I encourage you to look for these moments. Savor your family and friends. Welcome the stranger and cherish the unexpected kindnesses that comes your way. Each encounter holds potential for connection, for joy, and for growth. These are holy moments.

May you find beauty in each day and recognize the gifts God is placing in your path. You are not alone - God goes with you into every sunlit morning and every quiet evening.

God bless you on these summer days and always.

In Christ's peace,

Janis Heier
Pastoral Care Minister



DKG USED BOOK SALE

The Delta Kappa Gamma Annual Used Book Sale will be September 4, 5 & 6 at the Wylie Pavilion.

Bethlehem's donations can be made in the designated bin at the church, at the East Entrance.

Other drop-off sites will be Good Shepherd Lutheran, Kessler's, and Ken's. If you have a large amount, your books can be picked up; call Dee Zahn at 225-6713.

Please remember that magazines, textbooks, and encyclopedias are not accepted. All proceeds will once again go to scholarships.



Memorials and Honorariums

General Fund Memorials

Given in memory of Betty Pinkerton by: Lorin & Julie Fliehs, Carol Schuck, Ken & Bev Jones
Given in memory of Ed Hunstad by: Helen Anderson
Given in memory of Judy Anderson by: Helen Anderson
Given in memory of Bev Likness by: Helen Anderson
Given in memory of Lavonne Carlson by: Helen Anderson
Given in memory of Bob Janssen by: Helen Anderson
Given in memory of Norg Sanderson by: Bill & Linda Roth, Sheree Hogan, Geoff & Cathy Durst, Ken & Bev Jones, Bill & Jodi Gerdes, Roger & Lisa Reich, Ruth Wood, Jane Mundschenk
Given in memory of Sherwin Schwab by: Jeannie Haaland
Given in memory of Kevin Kalt by: Roger Rozell

Piecemakers Quilters Memorials

Given in memory of Betty Pinkerton by: Don & Linda Fischer, Betty Pinkerton Family

Broadcast Ministry Memorials

Given in memory of Betty Pinkerton by: Linda & Bill Roth, Joell Rachel, Jane Mundschenk, Galynn Nichols, Eloy & Janis Heier, Craig & Cheryl Papke, Stan & Kari Jung, Jerry & Jaclyn Schley, Sonnie & Diane Beaman, Craig & Carolyn Schaunaman, Sheree Hogan, Stanley Knudsen, Betty Pinkerton Family

Handbell Choir Memorials

Given in memory of Betty Pinkerton by: Betty Pinkerton Family

Worship & Music Memorials

Given in memory of Betty Pinkerton by: Crystal Swenson, Terry & Shirley Ochsner, Helen Anderson
Given in memory of Norg Sanderson by: Crystal Swenson, Gary & Carol Nelson
Given in memory of Susan VanDover by: Darlene Atkinson, Terry & Shirley Ochsner

Wednesday Night Supper Memorials

Given in memory of Norg Sanderson by: Joell Rachel, Jerry & Susan Brick, Sandy Kleinknecht, Joan Foss

Education Memorials

Given in memory of Norg Sanderson by: Jeannie Haaland
Given in memory of Judy Anderson by: Joe & Char Akkerman, Mike & Connie Kolling, Ken & Noreen Kundrna, Dean & JoLynn Kosteletsky, Tom & Diane Agnitsch, Rod & Vicki Evans, Eloy & Janis Heier, JoAnn Zweber, Stan & Kari Jung, Ben Grismer, Dana & Becky Guffin, Loren & Susan Jerde, Cheryl Olson, Randy & Bobbi Anderson, Roger & Kathy Carlson, Susan Siefkes, Sheila Rook, Kenny & Noel Anderson, Brad & Kathy Moore; Joe & Cindy Senger, Ken & Nancy Tiffany, Dennis & Marion Hartung, Gerald Miller, Bill & Linda Roth, Tom & Barb Kenyon, Earl & June Martell, Al & Colleen Ringgenberg, Jim & Jeanne Olson, Terry & Anita Small, Dick & Marcia Wilson, Ron & Jean Johnson, Mark & Kathy DeGroot, Dana & Aimee Sippel, LaVonne Kruse, Helen Anderson, Bob & Pam McLaughlin, Kim & Yolanda Jahraus, Ken & Denise Hier, Loren & Jill Anderson, Ken & Brittany Hubbart, Ken Gosch & Cristy Biegler, Don & Carole Weigel, Mary Beth Townsend, Paul & Colleen Wallien, Dan & Carolyn Gallup, Randy & Michelle Bacon, Virginia Doerr, Fred & Mary Garland, Aaron & Jacla Schultz, Roger & Jody Werth, Ryan & Laura Siefkes, Georgia Ramos-Guy, Kerry & Sandy Swinger, Elaine Just, Reed & Ann Rasmussen, Lynae Poel, Bruce & Barb Cutler, Stuart & Stacy Nelson, Robin & Susan Bobzien, Barb Harr, Victoria Wilson, Bob & Shirley Jacobs, Colleen Callum, Bob & Tara Mormon

Future Maintenance Fund Memorials

Given in memory of Norg Sanderson by: Delores Deibert

Youth Ministry Memorials

Given in memory of Lester Herr by: Gary & Dlon Kvernevig

Resurrection Garden Memorials

Given in memory of Judy Anderson by: Steve & Pat Casanova

Remembrance Walkway Memorials

Given in memory of Judy Anderson by: Amy Kessler

May 2025 Financial Update

GENERAL FUND

Analysis of Budgeted Revenues & Expenses

	MTD	YTD
Undesignated Offerings	\$ 101,801.44	\$ 515,835.70
Other Designated Revenues	\$ 70,811.85	\$ 330,723.57
Total Revenue	\$ 172,613.29	\$ 846,559.27
Budget Expenditures	\$ (141,496.14)	\$ (729,212.13)
Net Operating Total from Budget Operations	\$ 31,117.15	\$ 117,347.14
Other Non-Budget expenditures from designated sources	\$ -	\$ -
Net Operating Total	\$ 31,117.15	\$ 117,347.14

Summary of Assets & Liabilities

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,245,590.02
Accounts Payable due within 30 days	\$ (16,743.55)
Pre-paid tuition & fees	\$ (2,925.00)
Due to Restricted Fund Accounts	\$ (2,133.26)
Temporary reserve for D. Hagenson estate gift	\$ (205,137.35)
Reserved for Others/Temporary Restricted accounts	\$ (180,677.96)
Due to Mortgage Fund	\$ (2,435.21)
Total Unrestricted Cash Assets	\$ 835,537.69

The April Journal noted the Holstad \$100k estate gift would support ministries, reserves, and the Endowment Fund. Since we expected to receive the gift in 2025, the gift will remain in General Fund Estate Gifts, where it was budgeted.

MORTGAGE FUND

Income Statement

	MTD	YTD
Revenues, Investment Activity & Other Sources	\$ 5,873.57	\$ 21,090.76
Expenditures	\$ (4,660.20)	\$ (9,241.97)
Net Operating	\$ 1,213.37	\$ 11,848.79

Summary of Assets & Liabilities

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 6,237.65
Due from General Fund for Mortgage Fund	\$ 2,435.21
Total Mortgage Fund Assets	\$ 8,672.86

Mortgage Loan Payable at month end (paid off 5/28/2025) \$ -

RESTRICTED FUND ACCOUNTS

Restricted Memorials & Accounts	\$ 24,873.64
Prairie Mindset Scholarship	\$ 22,964.22

ENDOWMENT FUND

Endowment Fund Assets \$ 1,312,327.05

FUTURE MAINTENANCE FUND

Income Statement

	MTD	YTD
Revenues, Investment Activity & Other Sources	\$ 2,155.97	\$ 18,263.33
Expenditures	\$ (12,529.76)	\$ (31,247.33)
Net Operating	\$ (10,373.79)	\$ (12,984.00)

Future Maintenance Fund Assets \$ 24,147.41

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

1620 Milwaukee Ave NE

Aberdeen, SD 57401

(605) 225-9740

www.bethlehemaberdeen.org

office@bethlehemaberdeen.org

US Postage

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Non-Profit Organization

Aberdeen, SD 57401

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Place Label Here

*We are a family of God
journeying together in
faith, touching lives by
Welcoming, Worshiping,
Teaching and Serving.*



WORSHIP ON THE GREEN!

- SUNDAY, JULY 13TH AT 10:10 AM
- SUNDAY, AUGUST 10TH AT 10:10 AM