

*A family of God sharing Jesus
and serving Him faithfully*

The Bethlehem Record

The Official Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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Our Mission Statement

As members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church who have been granted eternal life through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, we worship Him as our Lord and seek to further His work of salvation through word and sacrament ministry in our community and world toward the goal of creating and strengthening personal faith in Him.

The Pastor's Page

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."

(2 Thessalonians 3:18)

St. Paul was a missionary. He moved around. A lot. From his writings and from the book of Acts we know about the various churches he started and/or ministered at. It seems he was at Ephesus the longest and there only about two years. Usually he had to move because his preaching of the Gospel – the message of Christ crucified and risen. This message was offensive to the Jews and often led to Paul and his companions being put in jail or beaten or both.

But there were times when he was compelled by the Holy Spirit to go to another place. And so Paul would go to preach and teach the Christian faith, and the Holy Spirit would create and nurture the faith.

I have been blessed to minister among you and this community with the same Gospel message for nearly six years. And not once have I been beaten or jailed for it! But given the persecution of Christians around the world, it may be just a matter of time before we are confronted with it.

According to the history of this congregation, I have served the longest since Pastor Peter was here, retiring in 1969 after nearly 18 years of service to this congregation. Perhaps there was a hope that I would be here that long, too. But the Holy Spirit has put it upon me to go and serve somewhere else.

So it is with a heavy heart that I write this final newsletter post. I know that many are sad to see me and my family leave this church and community. This has been home for us for longer than any other place has been home in my married life. You have been such a blessing in so many ways.

I believe I have grown and matured as a pastor. I've made mistakes, and by God's grace, been forgiven and learned from them. As a congregation, you also are not the same "person" you were when I arrived in July, 2009. This blessing happens when we are faithful in our worship and study of God's Word. For in His words are wisdom and life; in His Word we find the living God who is made know in Christ Jesus.

I may be moving on, but the Word of the Lord remains forever. God has provided for this congregation in the past. You have His promise that He will always be with you and provide for you. The Good Shepherd takes care of His sheep. The sound of the voice may change from pastor to pastor, but the message is still the same: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel" (Mark 1:15b).

Paul often concluded his letters with words of encouragement. He never said "goodbye" because He knows that by God's grace, we will all be united one day at the heavenly feast. So until we meet again, either in this world or in the world to come, God's grace and peace be with you.

- Pastor Augustine

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May Stewardship Newsletter Article

We pray in the Lord’s Prayer for daily bread. The *Small Catechism* teaches that “Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.” This is a pretty comprehensive list of what God provides for our daily bread. But all of this, eventually, and finally, will be taken away from us—not because God is punishing us, but because this is not the goal of life. There is more to life than these things. In fact, we will truly live when all these things are taken away, and we no longer need to pray for daily bread.

For God our Father in heaven is calling us home to Himself. We are just sojourners here. We are on a journey in the wilderness of this world toward our true home, the land of promise, in heaven. Everything that we have in this world and this life will be left behind.

But as much as we long for heaven, as much as we eagerly await that time when our Lord will take us from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven, we still struggle with letting go of what we have in this world. We still suffer the temptation to hold on to this life and this world and the things of this life and this world. But this is not our true home. And as good as this life is, and it is often by God’s grace very good, the life to come in His kingdom far exceeds it.

And giving – stewardship - is a practice that teaches us to look to, long for, and trust in the eternal realities rather than the earthly. It teaches us to loosen our hold and let go of those things that keep us earthly minded, so that we may look what our Father in heaven has in store for us for all eternity. It teaches us to concentrate on what God has done, is doing, and will do for us instead of the constant work-a-day world and noise that we have here. It teaches us to long for that better country, the heavenly one. For God is not ashamed to be called our God. And He has prepared for us a city, His city, not made with hands.

Thus we give generously to the church, to our family, to those in society. We release our grasp on what would keep our focus on the here and now, so that we would be free to receive and rejoice in what our future shall be in heaven. We invest where moth and rust will not destroy. We put our treasures so that our hearts will follow them

(Matt 6:21; Luke 12:34). For we are only of any earthly good, when we are truly heavenly minded. Make this your practice for your own good eternally and your neighbors’ good temporally.

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BOCL – April meeting

The BOCL met on April 8, 2015 at 8:00 p.m. Members present were Brock Mueller, Ruth Mueller, Barb Meitler, Tara Kubick, Tyler Gier, Warren Meitler, Marcy Hurlbut, Kylie Ehrlich, Gary Frederking, Pastor Augustine, and also Elder Lloyd Gier. Pastor opened with prayer.

The tabled discussion from the previous meeting of sending communicant members signed birthday and anniversary cards was put forth on the floor. Brock M. motioned that we proceed with this project, Warren M seconded, motion passed. Ruth M moved that the addressing and signing be done after the regular meetings, Tyler G seconded, motion passed. This process will start at the June meeting. The funding will come out of the endowment fund. There is funds that have been set budgeted for the BOCL.

Tara K reported that the request for the Dane G Hansen foundation grant has been submitted. We will know by the May 1 if our request has been granted. The amount is flexible.

Discussion was brought up about the congregation t-shirts, things to be considered are: amount of wording (etc.) time element, color and quality. Research will be done before the next meeting and then the board will decide.

Marcy H reported on the video recording of the church services. Ballpark figure is going to be \$350 or less. This includes DVD player/recorder, and wiring. The board feels that the trustees and church council should be contacted also about installation. Gary F will propose this to the church council. Marcy H will talk to Willis B about installation of the equipment and making it compatible with our existing equipment. Funding for this project will be discussed at the next meeting.

Tara K moved that we submit an ad of congratulations to the area high school graduates in the local newspapers, Kylie E seconded, motioned passed. Cost of this ad is \$42.50. Funding for this will come out of the Peach Cobbler stand money.

VBS is fast approaching, a leader for VBS needs to be determined. Brock will ask past leader Justine D if she would like to do it again. If she declines then other parishioners will be contacted by the next meeting. The board asked Pastor Augustine to order materials from

Concordia Publishing House, which he thought were appropriate.

There will be a potluck meal after the next voters meeting on April 26. BOCL will provide drinks and table service.

Next blood drive will be in May. Details will be discussed at the next meeting.

Tyler Gier will be the guest greeter for May. Next meeting is scheduled for May 5 at 8:00 p.m.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted. Brock L Mueller

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BOCL – May meeting

Tuesday, May 5 2015 8.00PM

Pastor Augustine opened the meeting with prayer. Members present were Tyler Gier, Warren Meitler, Barb Meitler, Brock Mueller, Ruth Mueller, Tara Kubick, Marilyn Wenthe, chairman Gary Frederking, and Pastor Augustine. Minutes from the April meeting were read and corrected to read Post Rock Community Foundation. Representing the foundation were Kally Keller and Sandy Labertew which presented the BOCL with a check for \$1000. These proceeds will be used for Sylvan Grove clean-up beautification.

Agenda items tabled till the next monthly meeting were congregational t-shirts and filming of our services.

The following was put forward as a motion by Warren M and Barb M second. Tyler G will submit an ad in the papers asking for applicants from Sylvan requesting assistance on clean-up and beautification, which is what this grant is for. The ads will be put in both the Sylvan and Lincoln papers. The applicants are to contact Gary Frederking or Warren Meitler, before the 23 of May. Before the clean-up dates of May 30 and possibly the 31, the BOCL will meet to review the applications. Food and drink items were discussed to serve the workers.

Barb M moved that we invite the community to Pastor Augustine's final service followed by a pot-luck dinner, Marilyn W second, motion passed. BOCL will provide drinks and table service. Tyler G will be in charge of the advertisements. Ruth M moved that a gift from Kansas Originals be purchased for approximately \$100 for Pastor, Tara second, motion passed. Funding for this will come from the peach-cobbler proceeds.

Shirley Krueger informed a member that she can get the ice-cream ordered at a discount for our peach cobbler stand at the Ln county fair, Barb M will contact her to go ahead and purchase as she did last year.

Marmie Wacker, Dena Sorensen, and Anne Dohl have stepped forward to lead the VBS for this year.

Dates are set for July 13 thru 17. Pastor and the 3 leaders are in the process of obtaining the materials from CPH.

The next blood drive is set for May 29, the advertisement is assigned to Warren M and Barb volunteered the snacks again.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2015 at 8:00 p.m. Greeter for June will be Marcy Hurlbut. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted Brock L Mueller

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Easter Lily Donations

Many thanks to the following folks for donating Easter lilies this year. Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

<u>From</u>	<u>In Memory of</u>
Ken & Shirley Small & fam.	William Small & Ray Blase
Wayne & Rozella Trapp- Roger Gier	Alfred & Eloise & Weldon Trapp
Pastor & Kim Augustine	Grandparents
Justine Dohl	Grandparents
Dean & Euni Thaemert	Parents
Emilie Wacker	Sidney Wacker, Robt. & Leonette Gier
Lois Heinze	Harlan Heinze & Linda Shore
John & Shelley Thaemert	Wilmer Thaemert
Marmie Schultz (Daffodils)	Sidney Wacker

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Acolyte Schedule May-June-July

May 3	Rachel Sebesta
10*	Marshall Hurlbut
17*	Grace Chegwidden
24*	Rachel Sebesta
31	Marshall Hurlbut
June 7	Grace Chegwidden
14*	Rachel Sebesta
21	Marshall Hurlbut
28*	Mekelle Hurlbut
July 5	Grace Chegwidden
12*	Rachel Sebesta
19	Marshall Hurlbut
26*	Mekelle Hurlbut

* Communion service

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Baptismal Birthdays in May and June

God's blessings to you for all His gifts of grace that you have received, and we pray for many more blessings for Jesus' sake!



MAY:

Chesley Dohl	Tasha Meitler
Jason Dohl	Tyler Nelson
Valden Dohl	Joyce Naused
Deborah Falcon	Ramie Schulteis
Kaden Gier	Marmie Schultz
Billie Groth	Lukas Sebesta
Lydia Janssen	Wesley Thrun
Shelly Keller	Janet Trost
Isabel Kirk	

JUNE:

Ashton Archer-Weston	Terry Lilak
Kolton Compos	Warren Meitler
Philip Chegwidden	Gary Sorensen
Cheryl Gier	Jeremy Wacker
Tanner Kubick	

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BETHLEHEM LWML MEETING - - APRIL 1, 2015

The Bethlehem LWML group met on Wednesday evening, April 1st, for their bi-monthly meeting. A hymn was sung and opening devotions were given by Shirley Krueger. Ramie presented the topic "Praying the Psalms", based on Psalm 145.

The meeting was called to order by President Coleen. Roll call was answered by 12 members and 3 guests, the Schultz boys. Shelly was the secretary-pro-tem for the evening and she read the minutes from the February meeting. They were approved as read. Ramie gave the Treasurer's report and they were also approved as read. She reported a balance of \$3628.98 in the treasury with \$1283.74 designated for the cookbook fund, \$1365.07 for the funeral luncheon fund, and \$980.17 in the general Home Fund. Correspondence and thank-you's were read.

The following committee reports were given:

Greeting cards - -Graduation cards have been ordered.

Mission of Love - - We are still collecting cancelled stamps & Campbell's soup labels. Making up various kinds of kits was tabled. Ramie reported that her mother, Connie Graves, has made 27 'pillow case

dresses' and mailed them to Rev. John Reehl to be delivered by Rev. Reehl's daughter to little girls in Russia. Thanks so much, Connie! It was reported that current stored material, etc. for quilt-making, was given to St. Johns' LWML in Lincoln.

Funeral Luncheons - - We served DiAnn Becker's funeral luncheon & a donation was received.

Cheer - - Since Elda Chegwidden is celebrating her 100th birthday this month, and she is still a member of our LWML, we voted to give her a flower arrangement and a signed birthday card on Sunday, April 12th.

Banners - - Shelly fixed the confirmation banner with Hannah & Kayla's names on it & it was used in church on March 29th for confirmation.

Campus Ministry - - 10 Valentine boxes were filled & sent.

Flowers -April: Justine & Emilie .May: Annie & Ramie Networker - -The new issue of Sonshine was distributed. Watering OS Landscaping - - March 29 to April 11 - - Barb Meitler, April 12 to 25 - - Sophia, April 26 to May 9 - - Marmie.

OLD BUSINESS:

Our LWML group served the meal before Lenten services on March 11th, serving sandwiches, soups, and desserts. \$41.00 was collected and given to Church Home Fund.

We had the Prayer Service on Saturday morning, March 14th, with the breakfast brunch following - 26 people attended, but only 9 LWML members.

The 1st Sunday of each month the Mite Box is being displayed as you come into church. We will also try to put a reminder in the Sunday bulletin the week before. So if you miss a monthly meeting/Bible Study, bring your Mites to church to put in the box. The children may also empty their little mite boxes into the big box.

Our adopted Seminarian, Travis Ferguson, at the St. Louis Sem, continues to send us news about his education at the seminary. He thanks us for the financial support we give him. He will get a vicarage assignment the end of April, get married on June 6th, and in August will journey to his vicarage assignment. Our LWML will send him a Bethlehem cookbook for his birthday and a \$50 check for their wedding gift.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Spring Rally will be at Messiah Lutheran Church, Hays, on Sunday, April 12th. We voted to give \$20 to the Kansas District LWML Mites to be taken along to the rally. Everyone is supposed to help bring something for the in-gathering that day.

Confirmation gifts of necklaces were given to Hannah Wolting & Kayla Augustine.

Discussion was held on fixing the flower planter by the south door of the church. Coleen will talk to Lukas Sebesta on this project, more on this later.

Discussion was held about having a fundraiser for our church in cooperation with Thrivent Financial. This has to be requested by early June so we can receive the allotted amount of \$300 for our congregation from Thrivent before that program is discontinued on June 30th. We'll discuss this more maybe in our May gathering. The committee to study this is Coleen, Shelly, & Marmie.

Our next gathering will be May 6th, with Bible Study by Pastor. Hostess will be Emilie.

The meeting was adjourned. Shirley gave the closing devotions. Delicious refreshments were served by Kim Augustine.

Respectfully Submitted, Shelly Keller, Secretary Pro-Tem

LWML Flower Committee
May
 Annie Dohl, Ramie Schulteis
June
 Lorelei Dohl, Sophia Schofield
July
 Barb Meitler, Cheryl Gier

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Welcome New Members!



Welcome to our church family (from left to right) Katie Lawson, Shanna Gier, and Sara Gier by adult confirmation; and Ryan, Kaden, and Rylan Gier by affirmation of faith / baptismal transfer from Immanuel Lutheran, Wilson, KS.

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Vacancy News

Beginning May 24, Bethlehem will be served by Pastor Jon Bonine of Zion Lutheran, Downs, KS. He has served there for nearly 7 years. He is married to Kristina and they have five children.

Service time will change to 10:30 to allow for Pastor Bonine's travel time. More details will be worked out in the days ahead. Sunday School will continue to meet after worship.

As Pastor Augustine was also serving the vacancy at St. Paul's, north Ellsworth, they are in the process of calling for another pastor. They did not receive a candidate from the seminaries, and so they are looking to the field for their next shepherd. At this time, they will use available pastors in the area for pulpit supply.

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CONGRATULATIONS!

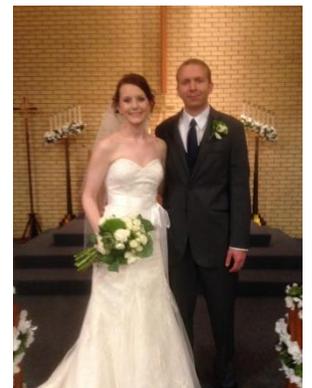
Our hearty congratulations and prayers for God's blessings upon these members of our church family:



Ashton Archer & George Weston married in Manhattan on March 14



Corey Gier & Caleb Hirsch married at Bethlehem on April 25



Janna Sorensen & Brandon Weber married at Bethlehem on May 2

ENGAGEMENT:

Congratulations also to Elise Schulteis on her engagement to Joel Sulsar! The wedding is planned at Bethlehem for November 7, 2015.

Coming Events at Bethlehem

Also available online at www.BethlehemSylvanGrove.org

May 17 – Pastor Augustine’s last Sunday at Bethlehem

May 24 – Vacancy service time change to 10:30 a.m.

May 29 – Red Cross Blood Drive

June 2 – Elders and Board of Church Life meetings

June 3 – LWML meeting

June 7 – Community Day

July 13-17 – Vacation Bible School

Our Vacancy Weekly Worship schedule:

10:30 a.m. – Worship Service (Holy Communion on 2nd and 4th Sundays and some festivals)

11:30 a.m. – Sunday School and BLTeens Bible study (school)

11:30 a.m. – Adult Bible study (Parish hall)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
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