

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

The Bethlehem Record

The Official Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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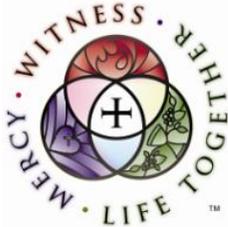
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October 2014

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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 sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Psalm 51:17

In many congregations, October and November often are times for annual stewardship drives. Go back a generation or two when America had a lot more farmers and this makes sense. After the Fall harvest was a good time to remind God's people of God's faithfulness in providing the crops and harvest and to give thanks and offer the first-fruits of the fields.

And it still makes sense for stewardship drives to take place in the fall, especially leading up to the Thanksgiving holiday. Why not appeal to people during this time of giving thanks and looking forward to the "giving season" as we get closer to Christmas.

I am personally not a big fan of "Stewardship Sunday" or stewardship drives. Having served on a stewardship board at a previous congregation, I got to learn a lot about what God's Word says about stewardship. This led me to the conclusion that a focus on stewardship shouldn't just be for one time of the year. Rather, it's an every-Sunday, even an every-day way of life.

You have heard and read the need for continued giving in this place. Many of you embraced this and rose to the challenge to give more and/or more often. For that, I give thanks to God for you.

Yet there are many who have yoked themselves to this

congregation who maybe don't know or haven't been able to give. So the Council has decided to draft a letter of encouragement to support the ministry of the Gospel here at Bethlehem. We do so with fear and trepidation. Letters aren't always received in the spirit they are intended. That's the Law at work in the heart.

Thus, the need for the Gospel. For only the Gospel can reach a broken and contrite heart that knows it has fallen short in so many ways, even in faithful giving to the church. Only the Gospel can deliver Christ to us so that our sin and selfishness can be forgiven and changed to glorify God.

The church gets no subsidies from the Kansas District or from Synod. Without the support of your tithes and offerings, there is no money to pay the pastor, the insurance, the utilities, and so on.

We are taking steps to cut costs where we can. But we also taking some time and effort for a mini stewardship drive this fall to inform and encourage the support of the Gospel in this place.

I've heard it said that there is no such thing as "Christian giving", but rather "un-Christian keeping." I think that's a good way to think about stewardship. It's all a gift from God that He entrusts to us to benefit others in His kingdom.

May God continue to bless us and keep us in His care, and may the Word of God enrich us in every way God desires!

*In His service,
Pastor Augustine*

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October Stewardship Newsletter Article

Giving is a spiritual issue. The Scriptures are replete with how giving and believing go hand in hand, that our trust and faith in God are commensurate with our giving. In 2013, the Religion News Service reported that the average annual percentage of income given to the church had fallen to 2.3 percent

(<http://www.religionnews.com/2013/10/24/report-church-giving-reaches-depression-era-record-lows/>). So, what does this confess about our trust in the God who has given us all that we need for body and soul, not sparing His own Son into death so that we would not die but live? What does this say about our faith, when even the Jew gave at least ten percent, while we, having received the fullness of God’s generosity barely give one fifth of that?

Meanwhile, churches and schools fall into disrepair or close their doors because of lack of funding; pastors and teachers live at or under the poverty level; and the State replaces the Church as the source for care of the widow, the fatherless, and the poor. Something is wrong with this. Though we have received generously from our generous God, we have not given in like manner. How can this be? How can we, as Christians and especially as Lutherans, who stake everything on that most beautiful doctrine of justification—that God, out of His divine goodness and mercy, has saved us by grace through faith on account of Christ’s death and resurrection without works of the law—not help but give of our income just as generously? How can we who have received so much give so little?

It is a shame, and we need to repent. As the Lord spoke through prophet Malachi, “Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’ Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need” (Mal 3:7b–10).

Do not these words even cut us to the heart? Are they not true for us even as they were for them? Are we not now reaping what we have sown in faith? We have sown little, we have sown sparingly, and so is our harvest. But what if we were to take the Lord at His word? What if we, like them, were to put Him to the test and give to

support the work of the church as our generous God has given all things to us? Would not the storehouses burst open? Would not the windows of heaven pour out blessing upon His church so that they could be a blessing and a light to the world? Imagine it.

But doing it takes faith. It takes trust that the Lord will be faithful just as He promised. For if God has given you His own Son, will He not give you all things? Yes, He will. This is His sure and certain promise. God provides for His people. He provides everything we need for this body and life and for the life that is to come.

Christ’s merits have set us free from the tithe. Giving is no longer something we have to do. It is what we do because of what God has first done for us. We give not because we must in order to keep the law. We give as a response of faith, a confession of faith in deed about what God has done and continues to do for us. For in Christ, we are freed from the tithe, freed that our giving is not out of compulsion or reluctance but generously from a cheerful heart and a life richly lived in the forgiveness of all our sins and for the good and blessing of those around us. And a life so lived enriches us all with blessing until there is no more need and thanksgivings to the One who promised to make it happen.

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BOCL Minutes

BOCL meeting was held on Tue. Sept. 2 at 8:00 p.m. Members present were Kylie Erhlich, Shirley Krueger, Dale Krueger, Marilyn Wenthe, Brock Mueller, Ruth Mueller, Pastor Augustine.

Pastor opened with a prayer. Minutes from August meeting were read and approved.

The next blood drive was scheduled for Friday, Sept. 5, noon to 6:00 p.m. Ruth will coordinate the snacks. Pastor announced that Midweek will start Sept 17, they're anticipating around 30 students to attend, Coleen is handling the food and teachers are in place.

Church brochure: Shirley priced several printing companies-Copyco priced 100 for \$.78 (per sheet), Laser paper, Pronto Print 100 -\$.90 (per paper) 60# paper. We can also print them here on our church printer. May be cheaper to do that so as to not have to print off 100 (print as needed)

Bottled water: Brock moved that we order 40 cases of water from Longford Water Co., since they already have our (paid for) labels for the price of approximately \$288 total. Ruth seconded, motion passed. Brock volunteered to go and pick up the water. Pastor will ask Shirley S. to order the water.

October 26 is Reformation Sunday, we will plan on a Brat dinner again, we will ask Art D and Kenny S if they will do the cooking again.

Pastor was approached to help school spirit sponsorship for basketball season. Miniature rubber balls will be thrown out with our church name on them throughout the games. Brock moved that we appropriate \$395.00 plus shipping for school spirit sponsorship. Marilyn seconded, motion passed.

It was brought up at last Council meeting about mass mailing of our different services and activities of our church to the entire community. It would be in the form, of a postcard. We tabled this for further discussion. Our next meeting is scheduled for Oct. 7 at 8:00 p.m. Kylie Erlich and Barb. Meitler will be Oct. greeters. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted Brock L Mueller

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BETHLEHEM LWML MEETING

The Bethlehem LWML met on Wednesday, August 6, 2014 for their bi-monthly meeting. Sophia led The Lords' Prayer for our opening. Instead of a Bible Study this evening, Lorelei spoke about several of our Mission of Love projects: the 'Baby Kits' and the 'School Kits'. The 'Baby Kits' project is over for this year and we should have 19-20 Kits available to send to Lutheran World Relief in October. Needed item notices were passed around for us to complete some of the kits – they are to be in by the end of August – get them to Sophia or Lorelei with the notices. The 'School Kits' are started now and they are to be collected by Sept. 19th. A display will be put up in the back of the church and anyone can pick up a list and gather the items.

The meeting was called to order by President Coleen. Roll call was answered by 12 members, everyone giving various names for JESUS. Secretary Lois read the minutes of the last meeting, followed by sharing of the correspondence. The treasurer reported a balance of \$3436.30 in the treasury. Of this amount \$1243.74 is designated from the cookbook fund, \$1564.34 for the funeral luncheon fund, and \$628.22 in the Home Fund. It was moved and seconded to accept both the minutes, and the treasurer's report as presented.

Committee reports were given:

- 1) Greeting cards – We have a nice selection on the table in the Parish Hall for anyone to buy.
- 2) Mission of Love – Kits – We discussed this earlier in the meeting. Stamps need to be trimmed.

- 3) Funeral Lunch – It was announced we would have the funeral luncheon for the Elmer Groth family after his services on Monday, August 11th. Food will again be needed and also workers.
- 4) Cheer, Banners, Church Guests, Campus Ministry, Library, Historian, and Prayer Chain Committees had No Reports.
- 5) Networker – Euni puts 24 copies of the LWML Quarterly in member's mailboxes.
- 6) Flowers – Responsible for flowers in church for August are Coleen & Justine, and for September Shelly & Coleen.

OLD BUSINESS:

Since it is so dry the outside landscaping and flower box needs lots of water. The Schedule is as follows: now through August 16th – Lorelei, August 17th to 30th – Shirley K., August 31 to September 13 – Shelly, and September 14 to 27th – Cheryl

The file cabinet is in the balcony and is ready to receive and file anything devotional or for Bible Studies in the future for LWML. We will be getting some file folders for the cabinet.

The Board of Church Life is going to make a new triple fold brochure for our church and is asking for help from our different groups. Shelly will help with this from LWML.

NEW BUSINESS:

We discussed whether we wanted to Adopt-A-Seminarian again. We sponsored Pastor Wm. Wingfield the past several years and he now is Pastor at Calvary Lutheran Church, Wellington, Ks. It was moved, seconded, and passed that we ask for another Seminarian who is from Kansas. Lois W. will call the District Office to see who from Kansas are available for this project. We again voted to send \$500.00 a year.

Our Fall Event/Guest Night committee is Emilie and Ramie. The date set for this is Sept. 7th, and it will be a Progressive Supper. We are to bring a guest along. More information will be available real soon.

Our 24th Annual Bazaar and Soup Luncheon is coming up soon on Saturday, October 4th with Coleen and Shelly as co-chairman. Shelly will be putting together the paperwork for each member and will be putting it in each LWML member mailbox. We also discussed having a church-wide garage sale on the cement slab the same day, but we would need other members of the church to work that. All receipts from the garage sale would go to our church treasury to help pay bills. Marmie will make flyers to pass out in church to see if this garage sale would be feasible or not. More discussion will follow later.

LWML Sunday is Sunday, October 5th with Euni & Shirley as the committee. We will most likely display the 'Baby Kits' and 'School Kits'.

The Fall Workshop is sometime in October at St. Johns', Lincoln. It will either be on October 12th or the 26th.

Thrivent Financial again asked if our church would host their annual fall meeting and dinner on November 2nd. The LWML cooked the meal for Thrivent in November of 2011. We will have more discussion on this at our September Bible Study.

Our next LWML bi-monthly Bible Study will be on Wednesday, September 3rd with Pastor Augustine presenting the Bible Study. Barb Meitler will be hostess.

Hostess tonight was Marmie Schultz, Jacob, Eli, and Isaac.

Lorelei led us in praying Luther's Evening Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lois Walter, LWML Secretary

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Baptismal Birthdays in October

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!



- Bayleigh Broeckelman
- Brandon Broeckelman
- Louise Feldkamp
- Russell Frederking
- Marla Heine
- Morgan Kubick
- Brian Meitler
- Kilby Meyer
- Kolton Meyer
- Jennifer Olsen-Dohl
- Kirk Schulteis
- Rachel Sebesta
- Malcolm Ulrich

- Bianca Broeckelman
- Vance Dohl
- Elvera Fischer
- Coyla Heine
- Shirley Krueger
- Kyle McCary
- Cheyenne Meyer
- Danyelle Murray
- Broderick Schofield
- Jacob Schultz
- Rozella Trapp
- Lois Walter
- Rhonda Watson

Donald Weseloh

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LWML Fall Guest Party

On September 7th, 2014, the committee for the Fall Guest Party at Bethlehem LWML, Sylvan Grove, KS, entertained their members and guest. The Sunday afternoon Gals-on-the-go progressive meal began at

Cheryl's house in Sylvan Grove at 4:30 pm for refreshing cool drinks and conversation on the shaded deck behind her house. The beautiful weather brought out 13 members, 2 guests and 6 young boys.



Our next stop at 5:15 pm was across town at the Bethlehem Parish Hall where Marmie served a large bowl of fresh veggies to choose from. She had dip already in a cups. All we had to add was our choice of vegetables.



Some 30 minutes later and a short block away, everyone gathered again, only at Ramie's house. She served grilled meat on skewers and a delicious potato dish to her houseful of guests.



And, finally, about 45 minutes later, the crowd carpoled to the country where Pastor Augustine led a short devotion and Emilie finished the meal and evening with homemade ice cream and desserts on her deck. Bookmarks were handed out along the way that reminded the women to “Stay Strong”, “Stay Positive” and gave some “Tips from a Dog on Living your Life”. Everyone was sent home with a mini microwave popcorn bag that was labeled “Pop out of your shell and share the warmth of Jesus’ love with someone”. What a fun evening!



LWML Flower Committee

October

Emilie Wacker, Shirley Krueger

November

Lois Walter, Euni Thiemert

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BLTeens News

The BLTeens have been studying the book of James since starting up in September. The ‘Teens will be serving the Thrivent meal on November 2 as a service project and fundraiser for Higher Things 2015 which will be in Seward, Nebraska on July 28-31, 2015.

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Quarterly Voters Meeting

The regular quarterly Voters meeting will be held on October 19 after worship. If you have an agenda item or something that should be discussed, please contact John

Thiemert or any member of the Church Council. Current agenda items are (1) District nominations for various offices, and (2) District Mission commitment for 2015. The Council may also begin looking for nominations for the January meeting and elections.

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**Acolyte Schedule
October - November**

- October 5 Kilby Meyer
- 12* Kayla Augustine
- 19 Marshall Hurlbut
- 26* Rachel Sebesta

- November 2* Grace Chegwidan
- 9* Hannah Wolting
- 16 Kilby Meyer
- 23* Kayla Augustine
- 30 Marshall Hurlbut

* Communion service

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Circuit 13 News

As mentioned last month, Pastor Kenton Rohrberg of Messiah Lutheran in Hays is retiring. His last Sunday will be October 26. The congregation is planning a dinner and short program to honor his 40 years in the ministry and 15 years serving in Hays, as well as grant him a peaceful release from his call to Messiah. The service will be at 12:30 p.m. Cards can be sent to the church: 2000 Main St. Hays, Kansas 67601



Circuit 13 also held a Forum and Mission Festival at St. Paul’s Lutheran of north Ellsworth on September 14. Those that attended were blessed with a great worship service with the Rev. John Mehl preaching, followed by his presentation on serving as a missionary in Russia and Hong Kong. For the business side of the day, Pastor Philip Hoppe was reelected Circuit Visitor for the 2015-17 triennium.

Coming Events at Bethlehem

Also available online at www.BethlehemSylvanGrove.org

October 7 – Elders Meeting and BOCL meeting

October 12-14 – Pastor attending KS District Pastors Conference

October 15 – Church Council meeting

October 19 – Quarterly Voters meeting

October 26 – Reformation Service and Brat Dinner

No Bible Walk this year on Halloween

Our Weekly Worship schedule:

9 a.m. – Sunday School and BLTeens Bible study (school)

9 a.m. – Adult Bible study (Parish hall)

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

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