



THE BETHLEHEM STAR

AUGUST 2011



Sunday Worship: 9:45 a.m. ~ Wednesday worship at 5:30 p.m.
 The 9:45 a.m. Sunday service is broadcast at 11 a.m. on KTOE 1420 AM.

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A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JAY DAHLVANG

Passionate Spirituality

Saturday concluded the last baseball tournament of the summer for our oldest son, James. Tammy and I have really enjoyed the season. We are, of course, passionate fans—sometimes I get so caught up in the game, I can hardly watch. I think it comes in part from a deep competitive streak. Another aspect of my enthusiasm is that I always have followed and enjoyed sports—whether it be the Gophers, Twins, or Vikings, I pay attention when it is our team playing. But finally, and most importantly, I am a passionate fan of the Mankato Royals 12-Gold team because it is my son playing 1st base or left field. I love him very much. I desperately want to see him and his buddies succeed because I know it brings him joy.

Our Natural Church Development (NCD) survey showed our maximum leverage point to be what is known as “Passionate Spirituality.” Simply put, the area that shows the most potential for growth at Bethlehem is defined as: “Are the members of Bethlehem enthusiastic about our relationship with Christ? Do we live committed lives and practice our faith with passion and joy?”

Not surprisingly, passionate spirituality is often the lowest score of Lutheran congregations that take the NCD survey. We tend to be “Head Christians,” rather than “Heart Christians.” I, perhaps like some of you, tend to be a bit uneasy about overly demonstrative worship services—it’s not what I grew up with and it’s not my preference. But for us, and perhaps for most Lutherans, should the concern be too much emotionalism, or perhaps not enough?

Passionate spirituality is not about style as much as it is loving Jesus, and embracing with excitement and joy the mission God puts before us. Our Natural Church Development Health Team has put together a series of events to celebrate God’s love in our church and in our lives, and to connect our lives in mission and service:

Worship Service of Renewal through Holy Communion and Healing

In the Greek language of our New Testament, the word for healing and salvation is the same, and the church has long emphasized God’s work of healing in our life together. We have received a warm welcome for our monthly time of prayer every third Sunday, and it has been a regular and expected part of our life together at Bethlehem since its inception last spring. We will introduce this to more people as we incorporate this time for prayer as a part of our liturgical worship service on **August 21**.

Tell Your Story

Faith stories, or testimony, are as old as the Scriptures as God’s people of every generation have shared what God is doing in their lives. The point is not to glorify ourselves, but to recognize the presence and work of God in our everyday experiences. Starting on **September 11, and every second Sunday of the month**, we will invite a Bethlehem member to share how God is at work in their life. If you are interested in witnessing to the love of our amazing God, see Pastor Jay.

The Marks of Discipleship

Many struggle with how to live a faithful life and to practice the

classic disciplines that enable us to recognize God among us and to share in God’s kingdom and ways. As we draw more deeply into active engagement in the classic practices of our faith, our confidence in God grows, and we recognize the presence of the Spirit among us. In September, we will begin a six-week series on the classic spiritual disciplines. More information is coming in next month’s Star.

Via De Christo is a method of spiritual renewal, proclaiming the truth of Jesus Christ through the power and the work of the Holy Spirit. It is intended to renew the faith of those already in relationship with God through a weekend retreat. Men attend one weekend, and women the next, with the hope that the renewal experienced will strengthen the faith not only of those who attend, but the church they return to. The next local Via De Christo weekend is scheduled for **Nov. 10-13 for men and Nov. 17-20 for women** in New Ulm. Mark your calendar and look for more information in coming Star articles and bulletin announcements. ~ Pr. Jay

Book of Faith Bible Study: Jonah
 Come and join us for a whale of a story. In our Book of Faith study for August, we will share the story of Jonah, the reluctant prophet, and his harrowing adventure. We begin our four-week study on **Wednesday, August 10**, and offer the course at two times: 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Cost of the book is \$8, and you can sign up in the office.

DEADLINE for the September Star is August 15.



PASTOR COLLETTE; AUGUST SERVING GROUP

Lord, Teach Us To Pray

“When you pray, do not heap up empty phrases like the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father in heaven knows what you need before you ask him.” Matthew 6:7-8

“Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words.” Romans 8:26

Ollie’s vocabulary is exploding these days, with new words and word combinations coming together every day. Last week, he heard a loud noise coming from outside our apartment window, pointed excitedly and said “lawnmower!”, his first three-syllable word. His understanding of what we and other people are saying to him and of concepts like “Mommy doesn’t like that” or “We’re going swimming” are greatly increasing, too.

So, I thought after all these months of praying over him and for him, it is time to teach Ollie to pray. We have a little book of children’s prayers, which we’ve been reading together for a while, but they are too

complex for him to pray himself. What should be Ollie’s first words to God?

The first place I turned for advice was to my parents, the ones who taught me to pray. We had this conversation while I was home last month, when I noticed they had been teaching my nephew to pray at mealtimes. That was when they showed me my older sister’s baby book.

I knew that my parents had been very intentional with our faith formation as children; we did family devotions every night before bed growing up. But I didn’t realize they had started from the time we were born until I saw this entry in my sister’s baby book. “21 months: Jenny is talking a lot and growing fast. She prays ‘Thank you, Jesus. Amen’ every night”.

Well, I thought, Ollie is 19 months old, so we better get going (I guess I’m a little competitive!). And then I thought, of course, “Thank you, Jesus. Amen”. A perfect prayer, and not just for a child. Josh often tells me that most of his prayers are simple thank-yous, too.

In teaching our children to pray, and in praying ourselves, it’s easy to get caught up in finding the right

words, the perfect bedtime formula, or the prayers that sound best when prayed aloud. We need to remember what Jesus tells his disciples when teaching them how to pray: simple is best, just say what you mean. God already knows all we need and want and think and feel. The reason God wants us to pray is to build our relationship with him. God doesn’t care what we say, as long as we take time to say something.

I encourage you to give some time to your own prayer life this month, and to think about the prayer lives of your children, especially if they are young. God is ready to listen and respond, whatever you have to say, whatever your age or level of understanding. And even if you can’t think of a single word to say, remember what Paul says in Romans 8: by the work of the Holy Spirit, even a simple sign becomes a prayer! ~ Pr. Collette



AUGUST SERVING GROUP ~ Chair: Carolyn Hovick (388-1389) ~ Co-Chair: Aileen Eick (625-3549)



Monthly
Serving
Group

Melvin Alms
Allan & Virginia Asleson
Myrtle Bidgood
Barry & Mary Bliesmer
Selma Braun
Chris Deike
Robert & Lynea Flom
Audrey Gatchell
Hilde Gushurst
Charles & Lorene Heaberlin
Gail Heaberlin

Carolyn Hendley
Violet Peck Johnson
Chad & April Lanz
Harlan & Joan Lanz
Myles & Jean Lorentz
Micah & Liv Musel-Staloch
Gladys Olson
Kris Osdoba
Marilyn Price
Al & Laurie Rossow
Ron & Jean Smith

Michelle Sprague
Karen Staley
Larry & Cindy Veldhuisen
Kay Wilking



Monthly
Serving
Group



The Earth Stewards Committee has set up a table in the narthex labeled Sharing the Harvest. The table will remain up for most of the summer. When those cucumbers and zucchinis get to be more than you can handle (you can only bake so much zucchini bread, right?), feel free to bring it in and leave it on the table. If you have any produce that would otherwise go unused (don't let it go to waste), please share the bounty that God gives us every summer.



Are you expecting a new addition to your family? Or do you know someone who is? Let the Mom's Circle of Bethlehem help by allowing us to get some home-cooked meals to you through the Meals for Moms program. Bringing home a new baby is an overwhelming & stressful time for many, especially during the first two weeks. Hopefully by providing meals, we can make that transition period smoother for the families. If you're interested, please contact Kami Matteson at klmatteson3@gmail.com.



Dinner for Six (or Eight)

The new groups for "Dinner for Six" will start on **August 15** and run through December 30. A new sign-up sheet will be in the narthex before and after services. Everyone will be reassigned to a new group. We welcome new and old Bethlehem members -- singles or couples -- to consider joining this social event. There are no special requirements to participate, other than a desire to become better acquainted socially and enjoy food and fellowship with one another. Guidelines are available. Summertime and fall are great times for grilling out, and brunch works well, too. Remember -- you only host your group once, and the others help by bringing dessert, salad, or whatever. How easy is that? From past comments, the food has been great and fellowship enlightening! If you have any questions, call Roger or Dee Saman at 388-6756.

On Sunday, July 3, Bethlehem members shared 120 noon meals at the **Salvation Army**. The guests and 20 workers enjoyed hot dogs (with sauerkraut!), chips, baked beans, tossed salads topped with hard-boiled eggs, bananas, apples, watermelon, candy treats, lemonade, and milk at an indoor picnic. **Thank you** to the following for generously contributing food, funds, and/or your time to this meal: Tom & Betty Sanger (team leaders); Chris Deike; Kay Hubbard; Bob & Bev Kulseth; Bob & Deloris Singelstad; Gordy Struss; Ruth Bell; Brad & Shannon Butler; Marlene Barnes; Ethel Medalen; Dave & Shirley Ruby; Gordy & Marilyn Larson; John & Kathy Croswell; Lance & Donna Quick; Lois Swanson; Arlo, Carolyn, & Ted Hovick; Armond & Dianne Olson; Carol Knutson; Kathy Yale; Shery Moody; Melissa Matthies; Pastor Al & Barb Girtz; Rae Allan; Bob & Susan Brown; Randy & Rachel Wood; Jay Backstrom; Elaine Kunz; and Pastor Jay Dahlvang. Bethlehem has been a faithful supporter of this community mission program since 1989. Call Bethlehem's coordinators, Bob and Susan Brown (387-2976), for information.



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Congregational Meeting
about the 5-year plan
on Sunday, August 14
at 10:45 a.m.
in the Dining Room.



Do you have a secret family recipe for cookies, bars, brownies, or cake?!? Then YOU need to enter the **First Annual Bethlehem Dessert Bake-Off!!** On Rally Sunday, September 11, the Fellowship Committee will be sponsoring the Bake-Off. There will be two divisions: adults and children. We will announce the winner during the 10:45 service. We will be sampling and sharing all the yummy desserts after the service during the Fellowship Carnival in our parking lot. More detailed information will be in the September Star. There is a sign-up sheet in the church office.



Name tags are a wonderful aid to get to know other people -- or are they a bother to keep track of?? For me, it is both! Let's try harder to wear our name tags. Wearing them will help Pastor Collette and other new members feel part of the congregation. Thank you to those who have been wearing their name tags.

~ Evangelism Board



The Lutheran Hour GOLF!

Save **Sunday, August 28**, for our annual Lutheran golf outing at the Minneopa Golf Course. Tee-off time is 3:00 p.m., with hamburgers and dessert to follow at 5:30 p.m. A sign-up sheet will be in the office, so you can sign up before or after Sunday services. Golf and supper are at your own expense. If you have any questions, please call Dee or Roger Saman at 388-6756. **You don't have to be a pro to join this group -- it's for fun only!!**



Have you ever thought about riding your bike to church any day of the week, but you couldn't remember if there was a secure bike rack? The Bethlehem Earth Stewards Committee has researched a simple bike rack, consulted with the Facilities Board, and decided that the space behind the bench by the office door has room for three bike racks. The total amount needed for three bike racks and installation materials would be approximately \$350. If you wish to donate to this effort, please write a check to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, with "Bike Racks" on the memo line. Thank you!

AUGUST MISSION PROJECT: LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

There is likely nothing more valuable than the gift of knowledge. Education is important for any community, especially where poverty or disaster has limited the options for young people to reach their potential. In August, Bethlehem is supporting the Lutheran World Relief School Kit project that provides the supplies essential to helping children and adults continue learning despite the hardships they face. The effort is an investment in their learning that will lead to a better life for them, their families and their communities. When we touch others with the smallest things, it makes a big impact as evident in the heartfelt thank-you letter from a little boy in the Shaanxi province of China:

*Dear aunts and uncles,
I'm a primary school student at Xinglong Primary School in Jinchuan Township, Shaanxi Province. My hometown was swept by large water last year. I couldn't go to school for a long time. I got your gifts and I'm very happy about it. I never used such good pencils, books and schoolbags before. I like drawing with those crayons. They are so beautiful. But I use them very carefully because I want to use them for a long, long time. I also like the bag. Now, my classmates and I can go to school with the new bags. I can write words on papers with the pencils. To use the beautiful new pencils is a happy thing to me. Sometimes I smile when I use those things you gave me. I want to thank you for your gifts. They are so good. And I think I will study harder in school. I want to be a good student. I hope that teacher will like me, dad and mom will like me, and you aunts and uncles will like me too. Thank you, dear aunts and uncles. Best wishes!*

The photo below is another example of the project's outreach in Peru.



How can we help?

Bethlehem has a goal to supply 2,000 bags for this project. We have been able to source the bags and many of the contents in bulk. **Additional help is needed, however, for:**

- * Volunteers to help repackage and fill bags
- * Monetary contributions to help fund the supply and shipment of the school kits
- * Contributions of supplies to fill the bags (as you do your own back-to-school shopping)

The following items are suggestions for each school kit:

- * Four 70-sheet notebooks of wide- or college-ruled paper approximately 8" x 10½"; no loose-leaf paper
- * One 30-centimeter ruler, or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other
- * One pencil sharpener
- * One blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)
- * Five unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers; secure together with a rubber band
- * Five ballpoint pens (no gel ink); secure together with a rubber band
- * One box of 16 or 24 crayons
- * One eraser approximately 2-1/2" long

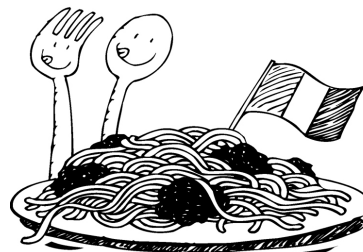
The week of July 31, the Vacation Bible School children will help collect items and do some assembly, and the CSI group will be helping pack kits August 7-12. Watch the bulletins for information and other times for assembly.

Thank you in advance for your help in providing our global brothers and sisters with the tools to support their learning.

~ Bethlehem Community and Global Mission Board

ECHO FOOD SHELF

In August, we'll be collecting pasta.



CALENDAR

Highlights of activities during August:

- 8/1-4** Vacation Bible School (begins on July 31)
- 8/2, 9, & 16** 12:10 p.m. ~ Organ recitals ~ Sanctuary
- 8/7-12** Christ's Servants Involved (CSI) ~ Youth
- 8/14** 10:45 a.m. ~ Congregational Meeting ~ Dining Room
- 8/23** 4 p.m. ~ Bus leaves for the Twins game

During the month of August,
the church office will close
at 3 p.m. on Fridays.



August 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 5:45 pm - TOPS 6-8 pm - Vacation Bible School	2 7 am -Café Ambrosia Bible Study 12:10 - organ recital 1 pm - Library Board 5:15 - Stewardship 6 pm-Music & Worship 6:15 - Earth Stewards 7 pm-C&G Missions, Evangelism, Facilities 6-8 pm - VBS	3 9 am - TOPS 10:30 & 6:30-Bible Study - Heritage Rm. Noon - Adult Ed. 1 pm - Staff meeting 5:30 - WORSHIP 6-8 pm - VBS	4 5:30 - Youth Board 6-8 pm - VBS ends	5 Office closed at 3 p.m. 5 p.m. - Wedding rehearsal	6 3:00 p.m. - Rossow/Miller wedding
7 9:9:30 & 10:45-11:00 - BCCC open house (coffee at BCCC) 9:45 am -Worship CSI begins	8 5:45 pm-TOPS CSI	9 7 am -Café Ambrosia Bible Study 12:10 - organ recital 1 pm - Library Board 6 pm - Fellowship Board CSI	10 7:45 am-Finance Comm. 9 am - TOPS 10:30 & 6:30-Bible Study - Heritage Rm. 1 pm - Staff meeting 3:30 - Women's Bible Study - GFJ 5:30 - WORSHIP CSI	11 CSI	12 Office closed at 3 p.m. CSI ends at 2 p.m.	13
14 9 - 9:45 am - coffee 9:45 am - Worship 10:45 - Congregational meeting in Dining Rm.	15 4 pm - Website Comm. 5:45 pm - TOPS	16 7 am - Café Ambrosia Bible Study 9 am - Quilters 12:10 - organ recital (last one) 1 pm - Library Board 7 pm - Council meeting	17 9 am - TOPS 10:30 & 6:30-Bible Study 1 pm- Staff mtg. 5:30 pm - WORSHIP	18 5:30-BCCC Board	19 Office closed at 3 p.m. Wedding rehearsal	20 3:30 pm - Siem/Lydeen wedding
21 9 - 9:45 am - coffee 9:45 am - Worship 10:45 am-Prayer Team	22 5:45 pm - TOPS	23 7 am - Café Ambrosia Bible Study 1 pm - Library Board 4 pm - Bus leaves for the Twins game	24 9 am - TOPS 10:30 & 6:30-Bible Study 1 pm - Staff mtg. 3:30-Women's Bible Study-GFJ 5:30 - WORSHIP	25 6:30-8:00 - Youth Gathering 2012 mtg. - Heritage Room	26 Office closed at 3 p.m.	27
28 9 to 9:45 am - Coffee 9:45 am - Worship	29 5:45 pm - TOPS	30 7 am - Café Ambrosia Bible Study 1 pm - Library Board	31 9 am - TOPS 10:30 & 6:30-Bible Study 1 pm- Staff mtg. 3:30 - NCD mtg - GFJ 5:30 - WORSHIP AT SIBLEY PARK			



**Save the Date:
Fellowship Carnival
on Rally Sunday!**

Join us immediately following the 10:45 a.m. church service on Sunday, September 11, for a carnival in Bethlehem's parking lot. There will be carnival games, candy making, face painting, a moon bounce house, etc., for children.

A meal will be provided for a free-will offering. The event is sponsored by the Bethlehem Children's Board & Fellowship Committee.

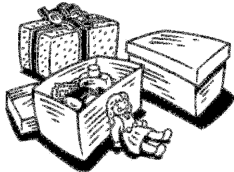


**Rally Sunday
September 11, 2011**

"Planting the Seeds of Faith"

LIGHT registration forms and the 2011-2012 schedule are AVAILABLE NOW online at www.bethlehemmankato.org.

Contact Leah Garry at 507-382-2205 or lgarry@hickorytech.net to volunteer or to learn more about the exciting LIGHT program.



**Operation
Christmas
Child**

"SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP" is a popular saying. This ties into the mission project of Operation Christmas Child (OCC). There are many back-to-school sales, and there are wonderful items to fill the **plastic** shoe boxes that are packed for this mission project. In the past, I have had grandparents make this a project to do with their grandchildren. Many families put a box

together, with all members thinking of ideas for their box. It is a great way to teach children to help others. This is not just a "Christmas present" program but a mission that introduces children to the love of Jesus. Not all of these boxes go to other countries, either -- a postage form is available from OCC so that a box can be tracked to its destination. After November 2, a display will be in the narthex for any donated individual items and for the plastic boxes. **The boxes have to be turned in to the organization by November 21.** A contribution for the postage of \$7.00 is needed for each box, too. All postage contributions should be made out to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, with "OCC" stated on the memo line. **No checks should be placed inside of the boxes.** Any questions can be directed to Vee Williams at 387-5154, or e-mail at fiveboys@chartermi.net.

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Faith Foundations**

*"Teaching your child
the heart of God."*

4-year-olds - What is Church?
Kindergarten - Who is Jesus?

1st Graders - Study of
the Lord's Prayer

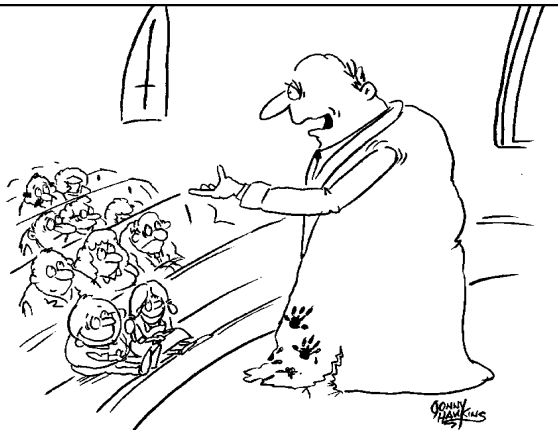
2nd Graders - Study of
the Ten Commandments

3rd Graders - Study of the Bible

4th Graders - Study of
the Sacrament of Baptism

5th Graders - Study of
the Sacrament of Communion

6th Graders - Study of
the Apostles' Creed



"And, once again, I'm reminded of Jesus's words, 'Let the little children come unto me.'"



"I'd like to buy you a pony, Teddy, but I don't get to keep the offering."



As I sit here, we are expecting a 100-degree temperature with a high dew point. Minnesota gives us our money's worth as far as variety. We are fresh off two amazing trips. The Boundary Waters was again fantastic. Our sites were situated for the most part with a prevailing breeze - giving us relief from the dreaded mosquitoes. We were so excited that no one was injured that Donna and I are returning for a 4-day rest and relaxation vacation next week. I can never seem to get enough fresh air and natural beauty that the area provides. We had 13 hardy souls attend this year—all of whom are already talking about the return voyage and which lake we will enter.

Our Tennessee mission trip was also amazing with 16 attendees. We actually went to Tennessee first. Our destination was Newport, Tennessee, which is located east of Knoxville on the edge of the Smoky

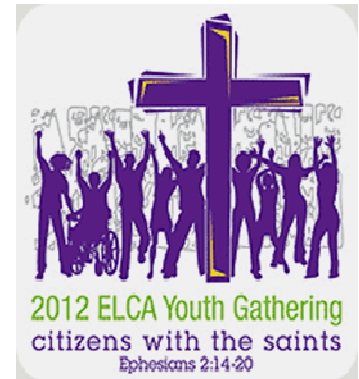
Mountains. Newport could have been small town USA in any state. I grew up in Starkweather, North Dakota, and Newport was larger and had more opportunities than I grew up with. Closer observation proved different, however. 87% of the area was on assistance. Drugs and alcohol were prevalent and a major problem. One of our hosts talked about drug dealings within the apartment complex that she used to live in. We learned that what you see is not always reality. We made good friendships with churches from Pennsylvania, Texas, and Indiana. We worshiped together and learned from each other as well as from the area we served. There is something about a mission trip that opens up doors to God. Maybe it is focus? Maybe it is human contact with God's people? Maybe it is a "mountaintop" experience that extends from being away from our norm? God is with us every day, yet we fail to notice—until God looks us in the eyes and touches our heart. Thank you, God.

I came away from Tennessee committed to making our CSI (Christ's Servants Involved) better than ever. Mission starts at home. We did not do anything unique or different than we can do in Mankato. Maybe our population is better off, but we still have those who need us more than ever with our economy like it is. This year, we are excited to have Epiphany, Grace, and Redeemer join us. Last year, we had 60 adults and 30 youth participate. We are hoping to have 50 youth by including the other churches, so let me know if you would like to help in some way. It is such a gift to have God working through us. With God, we can make a difference. See you in church.
~ Lance



CSI: Mankato 2011 (Week of August 7 – 12)

We are into full planning for CSI this year. We are working with the Salvation Army, VINE--Faith in Action, MRCI, the ECHO Food Shelf, some thrift stores, and two painting projects: Kathy Yale's house and the Betsy-Tacy project. Because of the size of our group, we are eating lunch at the Salvation Army, but we will make a donation to the organization for our meals. (We will still serve, but it is expecting too much for them to feed that many.) Our church responsibility is for three evening meals (Grace will do one and Epiphany another), some activities in the evening (we need chaperones and drivers), overnight chaperones at Gustavus for the Bethlehem youth, and assorted help on job sites on a day that you are free. If you want to help, you will be included! We are proud of our mission efforts, both locally and outside our community. It defines us by doing what God commissioned us to do—be disciples. With God, We Can Make A Difference.



ELCA YOUTH GATHERING in New Orleans 2012

Kris Oppgaard, representing the SE Synod, is putting on an informational meeting for all interested parties who want to know more about the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering. This will be held in the Heritage Room at Bethlehem from **6:30 - 8 p.m. on Thursday, August 25**. The Youth Gathering is July 18–22, 2012, in New Orleans, Louisiana. If you are even curious, come and see what it is like to be with 37,000 teenage Lutherans! ~ Lance

**Why the pew pads?!?
Are they important???**

The pew pads are helpful, but only if everyone in the pew writes their **name, street address, and ZIP code EVERY Sunday** and passes the pad to the person sitting next to them. Those who attend regularly usually don't feel any need to write more than their name on those pads, since they understand that the pastor already knows who they are (and where they live).

However, it is important to remember that pew pads are not primarily for church members. They are for **visitors**. But here's the thing: **if church members do not write their full name and address every Sunday, the visitor sitting next to them probably won't either.** This means the church office won't get that vital contact information.

Every week after church services, ushers collect the pew pad slips and

bring them to the office. Office volunteers record attendance and communion data. First-time visitors who include an address are sent a signed card. And what about those names without an address? The office may try the phone book or even *My Space*, but it is very difficult for the office to send a handwritten note, or call, or invite visitors to church activities if they don't get a visitor's contact information.

This is why it is so important for everyone to fill out the pads completely **every** Sunday. As an additional benefit, those sitting together in the same pew can look at the pads once they've been signed and put a face to a name. If you see that the churchgoer in your pew has checked 'visitor', you can make that special effort to greet him/her. Please do your part in helping us all to get in the habit of including **name, street address, and zip code each week.** Thanks!

~ *Evangelism Board*



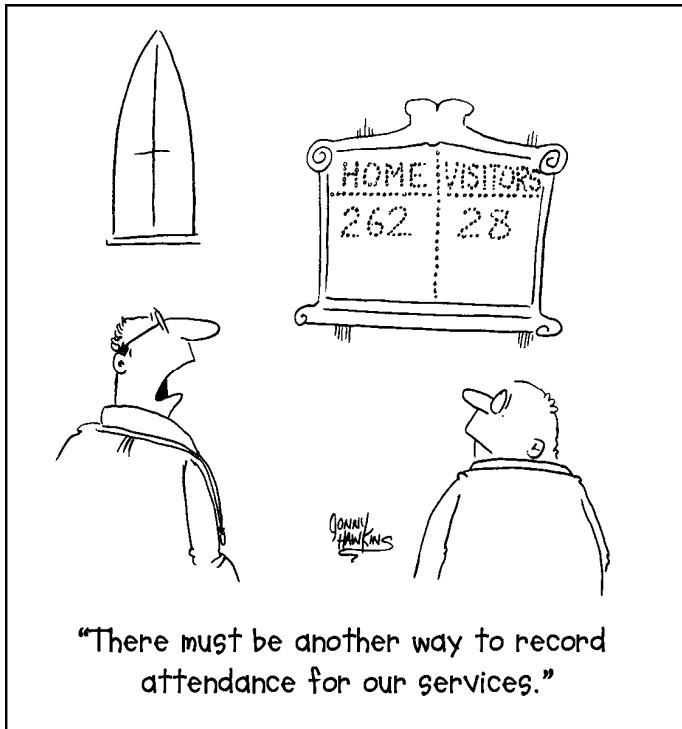
Although we ended the month of June with a deficit balance of \$4,300, there is also good news to report. Member envelope giving continues to be strong at 98% of budget.

So far in the first six months of 2011, we have received \$210,000, which is \$10,000 more than in the same time frame last year. As stated already, we ended the month of June with a deficit of \$4,300. At the same time last year, our deficit was \$25,000. This is proof of the financial dedication of the members of Bethlehem. In last month's report, we informed you that as we move forward with a full staff, the Finance Committee and the Church Council will continue to monitor the financial health of the church and keep the congregation updated.

Sentence Sermons

If you're blessed, help the rest.

Don't worry about your grip on God -- He'll never let you go!



Insect Bites

Most bug bites are harmless, but some bites can be very dangerous, even fatal. Here's how to tell the difference between a minor bite and one that's a serious medical problem.

Harmless bites are local and confined to the area around the bite itself. An ice cube, calamine lotion, or hydrocortisone cream can relieve the itching. Wash all insect bites well with soap and water to prevent infection.

Life-threatening bites are generalized reactions and can include hives or swelling all over the body, shortness of breath, wheezing, swelling of the throat with difficulty swallowing, nausea, bowel and bladder control, weakness, dizziness or fainting, a drop in blood pressure, shock, or unconsciousness. Call 911 if someone experiences this generalized reaction.

To prevent insect bites, avoid perfumes, aftershave, scented hair sprays, and scented deodorants. Wear insect repellents, light-colored clothing, long-sleeved tops, long pants, socks, and shoes. Floral patterns attract bees; so do food, beverages, and garbage cans. If a bee comes near you, avoid any sudden movement. Stay still or move away slowly.

~ *The Health Ministry Team*

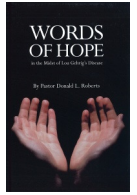


DEVOTION/BIBLE STUDIES

A Devotional from Pastor Don Roberts

Pastor Don Roberts served as pastor at Bethlehem from 1989-1996. He was diagnosed with ALS/Lou Gehrig's Disease in 1995 and continues to be an inspiration of life and faith to our congregation. His devotionals are written with the aid of a letterboard and an assistant. Pastor Don's book is available in the church office ~ \$15 each.

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my help and my God.” ~ Psalm 42:5, 11



This is among my favorite verses in the entire Bible. It is the refrain in Psalm 42. The writer of Psalm 42 was very discouraged, probably because of health reasons. In his discouragement, he looked to the past. He remarked on what he used to do and what God had done for him in the past. He was encouraged by what God had done for him in the past.

This is a device for us to use when we are discouraged. Look to the past

and see what God has done. We will be encouraged by that. The writer was like us in that we all have times of discouragement. In his discouragement, he wrote, “Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God...”.

God is a God of hope. Jesus, God's son, healed the sick, raised the dead, calmed the storm, and fed the hungry. This is our future. While some of those things might happen in

this life, they will definitely happen in the age to come. Jesus also forgave sins. As baptized people, we receive this forgiveness every day. Hope in God because God is a God of hope. When we hope in God, the next step is praising God. We have every reason to be optimistic people in the discouragement we all face. Jesus' death forgave our sins. His resurrection guaranteed our future. **Hope in God.**



Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University is coming to Bethlehem this fall. This multi-week series is designed to help families be good stewards of all God has given them, and to make the most of their financial resources. Look for more information on FPU and how you can be a part of it in the weeks to come.

Prayers Wanted! Our Bethlehem prayer team invites you to join us twice a month for a time of prayer, learning, and ministry to God's people at Bethlehem. The Prayer Team meets on the first Sunday of each month for a time of conversation, learning, and prayer. **We will meet after the service on the third Sunday of each month to pray with those who long for healing.** All are welcome -- tell Pastor Jay if you are interested.



Mom's Circle Bible Study

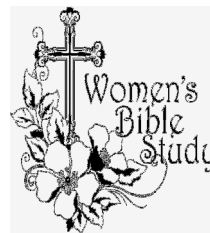
Mom's Circle is a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Our callings are to engage in ministry and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world. A group of moms with young children meets at 6:30 p.m. on the third Monday of every month during the year. **We will NOT be meeting in August.**



Men's Tuesday Noon Bible Study at 101 Main in the City Center Hotel will **NOT** meet during the summer.

Wednesday Women's Bible/ Discussion Group

will meet on **August 10 & 24 at 3:30 p.m.** in Grounds for Joy.



New Location - Café Ambrosia!

Join us every Tuesday morning at 7:00 a.m. at Café Ambrosia, which is located at 1720 Commerce Drive in North Mankato.

Men & women are welcome.

Come and join us -- we have room for more!

A Musical Note from Laurie Rossow, Coordinator of Music

The Wedding Garments

The months of planning have flown by far faster than I ever expected. We had fair warning from those who have experienced this life journey with their own daughter or son ahead of us. The plans all seemed to progress so smoothly. The day spent with my daughter, Jenna, selecting her wedding gown is one I will never forget. She tried on dress after dress. Each one a different style and fabric and then just like that.....THE ONE! She knew it and I knew it, and neither one of us could speak. My younger daughter, Marci, verbalized for us and was right there with her camera recording our emotions. A second day with "the girls" proved productive when a bridesmaid dress was selected that they all liked! That was easy! And then Jenna said, "What are you going to wear, Mom?". "Oh, don't worry, I'll find something." I start the search for the MOB dress. I laugh now because I didn't know what a MOB dress was, "Mother of the Bride" dress. First timer, you know! Well, I looked and I looked but nothing seemed to be right. I'll have you know that the guys have it easy wearing tuxes! When Jenna kept asking if I had found anything yet and if I wanted her to take off work and help me, I once again said, "I'll find something". Though outwardly calm-looking, I was in a state of emotional turmoil. I had friends offering to loan me their dresses. How kind; but, they

were the wrong size or the wrong color. I shopped and I shopped. What I found was either too plain; beautiful but over-the-top; lace -No! Sequins - I don't think so! A small train? - that's only for the bride; wrong fabric; wrong style; gorgeous, but way too expensive - we have a budget, right? Then...nice material; fits perfect; how much does it cost? - OK; you look amazing! But...a black dress for my daughter's wedding? The bridal consultant assured me it was acceptable "these days" so...I bought it. Now, in a matter of days, my husband, Alan, will escort Jenna down the aisle. He will be the dashing father of the bride in his black tux, and Jenna will be a vision on her daddy's arm in her white wedding gown. He will present her to an excellent young man that she has chosen to accompany her through life, outfitted not in his military uniform but in a white tuxedo. Their attendants, as the official witnesses, will look on in their formal wear as they speak their vows. Friends and family stand praying with them as they join together, a new link in the chain, a new family. Visible and invisible generations look on as this ancient religious ceremony precisely echoes that of other weddings. Alan and I will smile lovingly at each other as we witness this day but also recall our own wedding day. Could it be 30 years ago already? I'm certain my parents are revisiting their wedding

day 52 years ago. All three of these weddings the first week in August and all three weddings here at Bethlehem! We've all been invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. There is a wedding garment already made for each of us. It fits perfectly and its beauty is outstanding. It's made of righteousness and holiness, and it is spotless, white, and perfect. Jesus has already paid for it. It wasn't bought with silver or gold but His precious blood, so that we could go to the wedding feast of the King of Kings. Many people think they can find something as good to wear themselves but when the Lord looks at them in those garments they've made for themselves, He'll turn them away. The Lord will only accept and welcome those who are wearing the garments that He purchased for them. It is only by God's grace and love that we receive the garments of salvation. Read the parable of the wedding banquet in Matthew 22.

Scripture Verse: Revelation 19:9

"Blessed are those called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the garments you have provided. Help us to prepare ourselves and to be ready for the Bridegroom. Amen.

Sing Hymn: ELW #244 - "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"



STAGO ORGAN RECITAL SCHEDULE
Every Tuesday through August 16 at 12:10 p.m.

The Sioux Trails Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will conclude the summer organ recital series this month at Bethlehem. The recitals begin at 12:10 p.m.

August 2 - Michael Asmus
August 9 - Chad Fothergill
August 16 - Christine Schulz
(music by Franz Liszt to celebrate the 200th anniversary of his birth)



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES, LECTIONARY, & PARTICIPANTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sunday, 9:45 a.m.</u>	<u>Special Events</u>
August 7	With One Voice #5 Communion	Special Music: Jean Hoppe, Sweet Adelines, VBS kids
August 14	Contemporary - Praise Band	--
August 21	ELW #10 Communion	Special Music: Tanya Ringgenberg, Dee Saman & Joel Botten, Elisabeth Larson
August 28	ELW #8	Special Music: Bethlehem Octet, Sophie Nevills & Alysén Pettis

LECTIONARY FOR AUGUST				
<u>Date</u>	<u>First Reading</u>	<u>Psalms</u>	<u>Second Reading</u>	<u>Gospel</u>
August 7	I Kings 19:9-18	85:8-13	Romans 10:5-15	Matthew 14:22-33
August 14	Isaiah 56:1, 6-8	67	Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32	Matthew 15: [10-20] 21-28
August 21	Isaiah 51:1-6	138	Romans 12:1-8	Matthew 16:13-20
August 28	Jeremiah 15:15-21	26:1-8	Romans 12:9-21	Matthew 16:21-28

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS FOR AUGUST

DATE	TIME	READER	USHER	COMMUNION ASSISTANTS				GREETERS	COMM. SET-UP	COFFEE	
August	7	9:45 a.m.	Shirley Ruby	4	Dee Saman	Roger Saman	Brenda Boyer	Wally Boyer	Ruth Bell & The Benzie	Bob & Ginger Erlandson	Paul & Lisa Hagen
August	14	9:45 a.m.	Dee Saman	5					Jan Boyum & Selma Braun		Lavon & Sally Burdick
August	21	9:45 a.m.	Karen Sandersfeld	6	Jan Boyum	Lee Drake	Linda Engstrom	Etta Poole	Lavon & Sally Burdick	Brad & Betty Groth	Eunice & Florence Sassenberg
August	28	9:45 a.m.	Etta Poole	7					Ardyce Christianson & Cheryl Eigen		Harvey & Alice Kollos



BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

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SUMMER WORSHIP

WHEN SUMMER IS ON, CHURCH IS ON!
JOIN US FOR SUMMER WORSHIP!

We are committed this summer to providing services that meet the needs of families, fellowship opportunities, and camp opportunities. The church nursery (which is available to all children ages 6 weeks on up) will remain OPEN in the summer for the **Wednesday 5:30 p.m. services as well as the Sunday 9:45 a.m. services.** Marci Rossow does a great job of creating an atmosphere where God's love is captivating! Please pray for our church as we imagine our church through the lens of:

When Summer is On, Church is On!

NOTE: On the last Wednesday of August, we will gather at Sibley Park for the 5:30 service.

