



## Bethlehem News



Dear friends in Christ,

It has been seven months since we have gathered together fully. We have seen many disruptions to our daily lives. There have been things that Americans have been very divided on, and very little Americans have agreed upon. I am sure that for you, like it has for me, this has at times been very worrisome. In about a month we will all be voting in our country. This isn't just a local election or an election just voting on a few issues. We will be voting for who will be our next President.

From the very beginning of our country there have been issues dividing us. In 1788 the founding fathers established the Electoral College. In 1789 our first president George Washington was elected. As states joined the union, they created their own state constitutions outlining who was allowed to vote.

It wasn't until 1868 when congress passed the 15th Amendment to the Constitution granting all men the right to vote regardless of race, color. The Amendment does not give women the right to vote. And it wouldn't be until 1920 when congress passed the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote.

Much has divided us in this country and at times it sneaks into the church. So what are we to do but do as we have since the beginning of the LCMS. Seek God's Word on the matter. God doesn't tell us who to vote for but here are two things God does speak on. Exodus 20:13 "You shall not murder. This is a very clear command from God that we should protect life.

Also Matthew 22:36-40 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

37 Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. '38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself. '40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.'" Another very clear command from our Lord to help our neighbor, loving him looking out for him.

God does tell us render to Caesar what is Caesars and to God what is God's. " The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith." God's right hand through the preaching of the gospel bestows eternal benefits.

Our secular government or power deals with matters altogether differently. Secular power does not protect the soul, using the sword and civil penalties, protecting the body and goods from external violence. While the secular and the spiritual are not to mix, as the Augsburg Confession puts it, the Church should not set up or depose Kings. "It should not make or prescribe laws and obedience to political authority. Jesus said, "my Kingdom is not of this world."

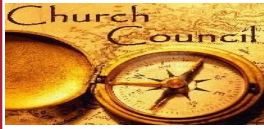
With this being said we do have a duty to protect life and love our neighbor. God does not tell us how to do this politically. But God does speak and I would urge you to seek God's guidance as you go to the polls to vote. After all we do have a duty as citizens of God's kingdom on earth and in heaven.

**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and Love your neighbor as yourself. Amen**

Blessings,

Pastor Karl

**News and Updates**



The church council met on September 13th. While we would all like to go back to our normal routines and practices at Bethlehem, we must remember our obligation to safeguard our congregation. The council decided to continue our Sunday worship services and Wednesday morning Bible Study in the church and *to restart Sunday School and Bible Study beginning October 4.*

We will postpone our monthly dinners until later in the fall.

**The election for Council Officers and Board Positions will be held at the October 25 Voters' Meeting.** The Nominating committee (Bob Jurs, Linda Kirsch, Paul Rugenstein and Pastor Karl) recommended the following slate of individuals for election:

Council Officers

- President- Richard Gerlach
- Vice President- Doug Grage
- Secretary- Holly Bell
- Treasurer- Kurt Laser
- Member at Large- Annett Brocious

Board Positions

- Board of Education- Sandy Grage, Jennifer Morosey
- Board of Elders- Paul Rugenstein, Kurt Laser, Edison Johnson, John Wittenberg; Gary Lohr
- Board of Evangelism- Terri Gerlach
- Board of Stewardship- Rollin and Pat Duckwitz, Bob and Marty Jurs
- Board of Trustees- Jeff Kirsch, Gary Dreischerf

*NOTE: If you would like to be considered for one of these positions please contact any council member before October 11.*



**Sept. Offering; \$ 6069**  
**Sept. Expenses: \$ 9346**

Thank you to all those who have sent in their offerings. In addition to mail, you can give online on the church website (blcefm.org) or through your bank's bill pay system.

*We need your support.*

Richard Gerlach  
Council President



The Altar Guild for October will be served by Betty Willis and Karen Johnson. Thanks to both for volunteering. If you have an interest in serving on the Altar Guild please see me.

*Pam Rugenstein*  
Altar Guild



It is now time to direct your Thrivent choice dollars to Bethlehem Church for this quarter. Do it on line or call Thrivent at 800-847-4836.

*Betty Willis*  
Thrivent Liaison



The Ladies will meet Monday Oct. 5th at 1:00 pm in the fellowship hall. All Bethlehem ladies are welcome. We will be discussing plans for upcoming church events and future outreach.

We encourage all suggestions and input.

*Pam Rugenstein*  
President

# OCTOBER 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 10:30 Worship *11:30 Bible Class Sunday School	5	6	7 10:30 Bible Study	8	9	10
11 10:30 Worship *11:30 Bible Class Sunday School	12 	13	14 10:30 Bible Study	15	16	17
18 10:30 Worship *11:30 Bible Class Sunday School	19	20	21 10:30 Bible Study	22	23	24
25 10:30 Worship 11:30 VOTERS MEETING (No Bible Class or Sunday School)	26	27	28 10:30 Bible Study	29	30	31 

\* Note new time for Sunday Bible Class and Sunday School. The change was suggested as a means to attract more members.

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES	
3	Carol and Kurt Laser
30	Marty and Bob Jurs

**May God Bless Each One of You As  
We Celebrate Your Special Day!**

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS	
4	James Nelson
5	Carl Nicholson
6	Kay McComb
8	Jack Young
9	Donald Sepulveda
11	Jase Albert
13	Gary Dreischerf
14	Lesia Kulbacki
14	Pam Rugenstein
18	Annette Brocious
24	Darrell Erdman
27	Frank Jackow
28	Marty Jurs

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### Prayer Chain Needs

Do you know that Bethlehem has a prayer chain that prays for the sick, dying and hurting needs of our church family?

Call or email Linda at (239) 693-5026 or [jlkirsch3@comcast.net](mailto:jlkirsch3@comcast.net)

Your needs will be taken to the Lord!

### Sunday Worship

10:30 AM Worship Service

**Rev. Karl Glander**

[pastorkarlglander@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkarlglander@gmail.com)

239-293-1489

Organist: **Holly Bell**

Church Secretary: **Linda Kirsch**



Operation Christmas Child collects shoebox gifts filled with fun toys, school supplies and hygiene items – and delivers them to children in need around the world to demonstrate God’s love in a tangible way. For many of these children, the gift-filled shoebox is the first gift they have ever received. Since 1993 Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 178 million shoebox gifts to children in more than 160 countries and territories.

In 2020 Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect enough shoebox gifts to reach another 11 million children. Bethlehem Lutheran Church wants to help them meet this goal by filling 100 shoeboxes ourselves. Let’s all participate and make this happen. Boxes are available in the Narthex along with shoebox gift suggestions. We are asking that all participants include a personal note of encouragement and/or photo so the children can relate to you, the person who filled their shoebox.

If you prefer the convenience of online shopping – especially this year – you can build your boxes at [samaritanspurse.org/build online](http://samaritanspurse.org/build_online). You can select gifts matched to a child’s specific age and gender. You can also add a personal note and photo on-line.

There is a \$9.00 donation per shoebox which is critical for Operation Christmas Child and covers the collection, processing and shipping of the boxes as well as ministry materials which accompany the shoeboxes. You can include a check with each box made out to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, or you can pay on line and follow your boxes on their journey.

These are difficult times for all of us. The pandemic has disrupted our everyday lives. It’s so important to continue to share God’s love and His Gospel of hope to those in need. Let us do our part and fill 100 boxes. Thanks to Joann Erdman and Betty Willis for getting us off to a great start.

Any questions call Terri Gerlach (239-243-8733).