



BETHLEHEM STAR

NEWSLETTER OF BETHLEHEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PEMBERVILLE, OHIO



Pastor's Message

By Pastor Tim Philabaum - December 2024

In our culture we have now come to the end of the year, but in the Church that year ended at the end of November. December ushers us into the New Year, full with God's blessings and grace – in the midst of the marvelous things yet to happen, and in the midst of the trials and losses.

But, sisters and brothers, there is one event in December that shines over all. And you know the story: Nine months ago the angel came to Mary and announced that she, in her virginity, should would bear a child. This child's step-father, Joseph, takes Mary to his home town of Bethlehem, crowded because of the Roman Census. They find a place with the animals (not so unusual, also nice and warm), and there she delivers her son, puts a diaper on him (swaddling cloths), and then into the animal's feeding trough (manger). Shepherds come



and
adore.
Angels
fly
around
and
sing.

Mary finally gets some rest. By the time Jesus is about two years old, they are in a "house," and are visited by the Magi, wise ones from the East, offering gifts. Joseph finds out that they are in danger. Off to Egypt for a while, and then they settle in Nazareth. There seems to be silence about Jesus' life until he is about 12.

Ah, the songs, the memories, the families-together, the foods, the winter-ness of our hemisphere, and the birth of the Babe fill us with such joy, and wonder, and amazement, and hope. God has become one of us!

That's really the key of this birth. God, who has no beginning and will have no

end, God who has always been and will always be Trinity (One in Three, Three in One), God who is so dramatically different than God's created humans, God who is outside time and is timeless, has entered into time, entered into the flesh of humanity, has submitted God's self in Mary's womb, and is subject to our human condition. The Early Church made some effort to explain this, but in the end calls it a mystery – In Jesus Christ humanity and God are one, both present fully, but one. Then, about 30 years later, this One took upon Himself all the sin and pain of the world, wrapped it in His arms on the cross, and took on our death, conquering even death on Sunday. Yep, that's the story that changes the world!

Now, after all those years

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President

Luann Snyder

Vice-President

Susie Rahe

Treasurer

Renee Farmer

Secretary

Jen Schuerman

220 Cedar Street

PO Box 344

Pemberville, OH 43450

419-287-4182

bethlehempemberville.org

Office Hours:

Mon. - Thurs.

9:00am - 2:00pm

9:00 am– 12:pm Friday

If you need to update your contact information including if you have a

PO Box, please call the office

or email

office@bethlehempemberville.org

2025 Council Members

President

Susie Rahe

Vice President

Luann Snyder

Secretary

Jen Schuerman

Treasurer

Renee Farmer

Elders

Willie Fisher

Ken Gerwin

Trustees

Dean Schuerman

Aaron Marten

Matt Meyer

Rodger Burtchin

Deacons

Neil Karns

Karen Korn

Kyle Culp

Corey Bettenbrock

Youth Deacon

Ashlyn Wightman

Eastwood High School Art Department

The Eastwood High School Art Department is in need of newspapers and magazines. There will be a box outside the office to put them in. Thank you for your help!

Mission Action Report

Donations this year include: School bags 126, Personal Care Kits 46, Baby kits 11 and 195 beautiful quilts made by our quilting bunch.

Bethlehem Shining Stars

We would like to share a little more about our church custodian, Jennifer Dodd. Jennifer grew up in the Eastwood District with one sister and one brother. She has been married to her husband Curtis for eight years. They have three children, Gabe, age 12, Hensley, age 8, and Dalton, age 5. Her family has two dogs and a cat. They enjoy spending time together with baseball and cheer. Jennifer enjoys baking cookies and reading or listening to a good book.

Jennifer graduated from Eastwood in 2008 and went to college to become a nurse. She worked at Flower Hospital for many years and in 2014 moved to Wood County Hospital and worked for Dr. Bell. She became a stay at home mom for seven years before starting at Bethlehem. Jennifer has been at Bethlehem for two years and enjoys all the people that have come into her life. When asked how she believes that Bethlehem carries out the mission of the church, she shared that the food pantry always helps others in times of need.

Lastly, Jennifer shared that her dream vacation is to take a trip to Bora Bora. Bethlehem is thankful for your service to the church.

Christmas Program

The children's Christmas program is scheduled during the church service on Dec. 15th. Please join us following the service for a brunch, fellowship, and craft activity. We need to know how many are attending to make appropriate plans for food and supplies. The sign-up sheet will be located outside the office. Let's celebrate our children who will be sharing the Christmas story.



Christmas Eve

Again, this year, we will celebrate our Lord's birth on Tuesday, December 24, both 6pm and 10pm. Each service will offer Holy Communion and candlelit singing. Each service will be a time to "come and worship the New-Born King!" O, come let us adore him!

BY THE NUMBERS

From The Financial Office

October , 2024	Beg Balance	Deposits	Expenses	Balance
Operating	\$80,994.42	\$23,996.60	\$26,529.29	\$78,461.73
Memorial	\$5,636.60			\$5,636.60
Benevolence	\$18,930.40	\$2,070.00		\$15,903.04
Outreach	\$42,120.82	\$5,617.80	\$5,394.44	\$42,344.18
Pass Through		\$237,801.08	\$237,801.08	\$237,801.08
Totals	\$337,054.02	\$269,422.48	\$275,014.66	\$331,461.84

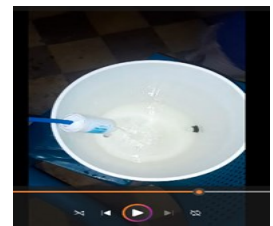
Mission Honduras

Plans for our late January brigade are shaping up. Our team will include Pastor Tim, Eric Corns, Teresa Witker, Karen Schultz, Ann Markowski, Jen Schuerman, Luann Snyder, and myself. During the first week of the brigade, we will once again partner with the Amigos de San Carlos medical brigade from Tacoma, Washington, for five medical/filter brigades. Eric, Ann, and Jen will be filling prescriptions in the pharmacy, which will be checked by a pharmacist before being dispensed to our patients. Luann and Karen will be responsible for checking vitals, obtaining medical histories, and triaging lab work in nursing. Pastor Tim will assist patients in navigating from station to station during the brigades. Teresa will teach oral hygiene, promote the use of clean water for personal hygiene, and distribute oral care kits. I will be working at the filter check-in desk, retrieving filter “records” for each filter, placing a bar code on each filter we see, and doing what I can to help the filter checks flow smoothly. During the last four days of our brigade, our entire team will focus on “water work” - checkups, distributions, and clean water education. As always, we will partner with local leadership in each village to ensure our work impacts those we serve and that we use donor dollars wisely. During our filter brigades, we will work one-on-one with families to resolve any issues with their filters, provide any needed supplies, continue clean water education, and conduct water testing as needed.

We have learned from our water testing program that many of our Filters of Hope are becoming less effective at removing bacteria and parasites, especially if not well maintained. This year, we will start replacing Filters of Hope with the more reliable Sawyer International Filters for families who have attended four or more checkups and demonstrated the skills to maintain their filters. Families must return their Filter of Hope to receive a new filter. Our team will evaluate the returned filter, and if it still has useful life, we will clean and sanitize it for redistribution to households needing replacements who have not attended checkups regularly. If these families continue to attend checkups, they will also receive a new Sawyer filter. This emphasizes the importance of attending checkups to ensure filters work correctly and families have the necessary skills. Although it is a tough decision, we do not have enough filters to go around and cannot justify turning away new households to replace filters for families that have not shown commitment to caring for the original filter.

We plan to distribute at least 150 filters to new households during our brigade, near Mata, where water is highly contaminated. Tulio, the clinic nurse, recently visited a home using one of our filters. The photo on the left shows a bucket of water collected from a local stream. Due to the rainy season, many rivers and streams are contaminated with high levels of sediment, bacteria, and parasites from runoff. Before receiving a filter, this family would place a t-shirt over the buckets to screen out dirt and let the water sit for a few days to settle the sediment. Thanks to their filter, they now have access to crystal-clear water (photo on the right.)

Please keep our team in your prayers as we prepare for our trip. If you would like to provide a filter for a rural Honduran family, please make your check payable to Mission Honduras-Bethlehem. All your donations will be used to purchase, distribute, and maintain filters. Your donations will NOT be used to defray the costs of brigade members’ trips or the costs of the medical brigade. As always, please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for your ongoing support of this mission. Darla (419-575-0078)



From the Financial Office

Please keep in mind if you are considering any year end contributions, those should be turned in to the Financial Office no later than Monday, December 30, 2024 at Noon in order for them to be processed in 2024. Thank You! Denise

Tuesday evening Bible Study

There are three Tuesdays in December for us to meet: the 3rd, the 10th, and the 17th. Here at the end of the calendar year I want to take these three weeks to do a quick overview of the end of Time, as told in the Revelation to St. John. On the 3rd we will explore Revelation 1-8a, then on the 10th it will be chapters 8b-14, and then conclude the book on the 17th. A quick overview, but a chance to see and discuss the full vision and gain understanding of God’s plans. All this will commence at 6pm in the Fellowship Hall. Come for this travel into the future!



NOVEMBER COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



Visitors Present: Denise Corns-Preschool Updates.

4 f/t & 8 p/t employees, 8 high school students volunteer after school to help kids.

66 kids in preschool, 46 extended care, 70 elementary extended care kids

They have received a grant to purchase air filters for the preschool which has helped decrease illnesses seen with the children. The grant program is now being extended to the church to potentially purchase filters. Grant application shared with Luann Snyder for follow up.

Approval of Minutes from October 17:

Motion to accept by Roger Burtchin, second by Duane Peters. Motion Carries

Observations of living our mission:

- Pre-school attendance,
- Cub scout participation has 78
- Xmas shoeboxes
- positive community feedback for Strategic Plan

Reports of Officers:

A: Pastors report: Pastors written report was reviewed, gave a few updates on current hospitalizations

B: Treasurer's report: Reports were reviewed

-Final disbursement from Brunk estate will come soon, distributed per Invest committee guidelines

C: Trustee Report-

- New doors are installed, finishing touches still being done. Old doors to be sold for \$500 Motion to accept made by Duane P., second by Neil K.-carried
- Initial roof repairs completed by Integrity, some new damage was discovered. Working on those repairs currently
- Still awaiting quotes from a couple companies for new metal roof
- Work on lighting & fixtures is ongoing
- reach out to North Branch for current year snow removal contract
- Christmas decorations will be organized & set up the week of Thanksgiving
- Morlock paving will honor their quote until spring for lot repairs Insurance Policy review
 - Annual premium has increased to \$17,000 from \$14,000
 - Deductible has increased to \$10,000
 - Will reach out to other Insurance carriers for quotes.
 - Because the preschool has its own board and payroll, the insurance provider recommends the preschool purchase a separate policy. Motion to reach out to pre-school to explore whether they should carry their own liability coverage. Motion made by Willie F., seconded by Roger B.-carried Duane will communicate council's decision to Denise Corns

Committee Reports:

A. Long Range Planning-

1) Investment Committee- determining how to distribute funds into various CD maturity lengths to earn more interest than in the MM funds

2) still determining how much funds will be allocated for distribution to LRP for next year

B. Parish Ed-

1) Kids Christmas program is Dec 15. Planning a brunch after with crafts for the kids

2) Beer & Hymns- Luckey Junction willing to host, date TBD. Extend invitation to local churches to join in.

Old Business:

Strategic Planning: Meeting again Nov 24 after church. Putting final touches on the plan. Hoping to present to council in December to be ready to present to congregation at annual meeting in Feb.

B. Landscaping: most current plantings need to be replaced. Will do the removal in-house, look to a few companies for quotes for replacements.

C. Church parking spaces: will reach out to neighbors in person to resolve the issues.

New Business:

A: Blood Drive: January 25, 2025 in fellowship hall

Motion to allow by Duane P., second by Willie F.- carries

B: Call Committee nominations

-Janice Smith, Jessyca Smith, Andrew Krais, Scott Schuerman, Josh Gerwin & Suzie Rahe.

Motion to accept members by Roger B., Second by Tim P.- carries

C: Installation of Call Committee members & new council members during church service January 12, 2025

D: Annual Meeting: Feb 9, 2025. Deadline to get reports to the office Jan 15, 2025.

Will meet in the Fellowship hall to include the Strategic Plan presentation

E: Next meeting will begin early to meet new council members, orientation, meeting & social time.

F: Looking in to preschool family gifts, Renee & Denise will look into what we can do.

Motion to purchase gifts, ideally \$5 per family by Willie F., second by Roger B.- carries

Next Meeting: Thursday December 19, 2024 6pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Schuerman

Council Secretary



Happening This Month: December

December Mission Action Project: Community Food Pantry

The Community Food Pantry is available every Tuesday of the month 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., the second and last Saturday's of the month from 8-11 a.m. (excluding holidays & the last Saturday of October) for Eastwood community residents in need of food.

The Community Food Pantry is housed here at Bethlehem. We accept non-perishable food items such as canned fruits and vegetables, boxed potatoes and meals, cereal, condensed or chunky style soups, tuna fish, canned meats, crackers, noodles, canned pastas, condiments (ketchup, mustard, etc.), peanut butter, jellies/jams. We also accept kleenex, toilet paper, paper towels, household cleaners, laundry detergent, fabric softener and basic personal items (soap, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes and toothpaste).

Food for the pantry can be left in the Mission Action Room (111) any time. The bins are right inside the door on a table.

Cash donations are also accepted. Thank you!



Praying...

FOR HEALING AND HOPE

Chuck Blausey, Tom Rahe, Mel Karns

FOR GRIEVING

Alton Beeker

FOR OUR BISHOPS

Elizabeth Eaton and Daniel Beaudoin

FOR OUR MISSION PARTNERS

Sociedad Amigos de los Ninos Honduras,
Missions International (Haiti), Redeemer Church,
Operation Christmas Child

FOR LOCAL MISSIONS

Snack Pack Program, Good Samaritan Fund, Community Food Pantry, Habitat for Humanity,
The Linen Closet, Grace's Place,
Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool & Extended Care, WCOAA Senior Care, Cub Scout Pack 344, Scouts BSA Troops 344 and 9344

FOR ALL YOUTH

Food Pantry Needs Your Help

Please help the Food Pantry stock these needed items in

December:

- Noodles
- Spaghetti Noodles
- Kleenex
- Paper Towels
- Toothbrushes

The Food Pantry always accepts non-perishable food items such as canned fruits and vegetables, boxed potatoes cereal and soups. They also accept facial tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, household cleaners, laundry detergent, fabric softener and basic personal items (soap, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo and conditioner).

Food for the pantry can be left in the Mission Action Room (111) any time. The bins are located right inside the door on a table.

Monetary donations are always welcomed so that the pantry can restock items as needed.

The Food Pantry is available every Tuesday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., as well as the second and last Saturday of the month from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (excluding holidays) for Eastwood community residents in need of food.



Serving this month in Worship and Beyond

Altar Flowers

Joanne Busdeker

Altar Guild

Nancy Rife

Office Window

Nancy Rife

Service Org (Funerals)

Joan Slebos

Help Members Celebrate Their 80+ Birthday!

Celebrate this joyous occasion with the members below by sending a card or give a greeting!

- ◆ 12/2 Joyce Ford-Brinker
- ◆ 12/3 Joan Slebos
- ◆ 12/8 Eileen Schuerman
- ◆ 12/9 Jane Nowlin
- ◆ 12/19 Mary Kuhlman
- ◆ 12/25 Vic Schuerman
- ◆ 12/26 Darla Rahe
- ◆ 12/30 Ken Sieving

If your 80+ birthday is not included here, please contact the office at 419-287-4182 so we can update our records.



THANK YOU

Pemberville Folks,
Thank you for the amazing
care package of goodies. We
love Oreos in our house!
We love getting all the
goodies and Izzy loves seeing
them! Thank you again!
xoxo Caitlin & Izzy Barker

Dear Bethlehem members,

Our 2024 OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD shoebox campaign was a success. We delivered 277 boxes. Donations were from Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Pre School and Day Care, Senior Center, Pemberville Methodist Church, Thrivent, along with generous donations from Home Depot, Walmart, County-Line Co-op, Dr. Hebeka and anonymous donors. Noisy Offering was used for shipping and we thank all of you who donated to that. We also thank the ladies and children that helped pack boxes.

We sincerely thank all of you for your donations and support of this project. Please pray for the children receiving the shoe boxes, The Samaritans Purse workers and the people who share God's word to those who have never heard about God before.

Again, a GREAT BIG THANK YOU to everyone who helped make the 2024 Operation Christmas Child shoebox campaign a success.

Sincerely,

Vic and Eileen Schuerman

KIDS ACTIVITIES



Christmas Joy

John answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." Luke 3:11 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 3:7-11



V H Z L G N E R T T R E E W X
K Y P D M M R Y H R L B E W T
Q A N S H L K I H U S L B K O
I I W T N P M X B A C N W B Y
M C M O S D E F C R O W D U M
R V M N L H E G Y U G V F J G
O S O E S G S F I W V O O J Z
O H D S B R T S D X D I O M S
T A A O E J T P Z E Z H D M V
I R P P E R L F Z Q Z O B T O
C E I N I C I I E Y O O I D E
R V O H W B T R B R K U T O I
W N S Q S P I X B Z R A W K K
W L D P A F N Y M F C T K D O
I S R B C H I L D R E N B R M

FIRE
ROOT
VIPERS

CROWD
SHARE
NONE

TREE
STONES
TWO

FOOD
SHIRTS
FRUIT

CHILDREN
BAPTIZED
BROOD

Fanfare for a King

Complete the sentences by filling in the blanks with the correct words from the word bank at the bottom of the page.



John the Baptist Prepares the Way

He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of _____.

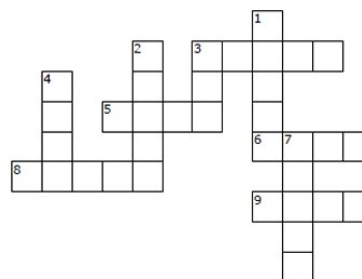
As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A _____ of one calling in the _____, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make _____ paths for him. Every _____ shall be filled in, every _____ and hill made low. The _____ roads shall become _____, the _____ ways _____.
And all mankind will see God's salvation.'"

Luke 3:3-6 (NIV)

MOUNTAIN	STRAIGHT	ROUGH	STRAIGHT	DESERT
VALLEY	CROOKED	SMOOTH	SINS	VOICE

Christ Is Coming Again

At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Luke 21:27 (NIV)



ACROSS

3. Twinkling points of light in the sky at night
5. The large heavenly body visible in the night sky
6. The part of the body containing the brain, eyes, ears, nose, mouth
8. To rise to an upright position on your feet
9. To make a request to God

DOWN

1. To observe very carefully
2. Large, white, fluffy things floating in the sky
3. The earth's source of heat and light
4. To raise from a lower to a higher position
7. The planet on which we live

earth
sun

moon
stars

cloud
watch

pray
lift

head
stand

DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15am Adult Bible Study 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	2	3	4 6:00-7:00pm Girl Scout Leader Meeting FH	5	6 Church Office Closed	7
8 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15am Adult Bible Study 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	9 6:45 pm Yoga 7:00 pm Priscilla Circle 7:30 pm Dartball	10 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open 6pm Bible Study	11 6:30-8:00pm Cub Scouts Meeting 6:15pm Bells 7:30pm Choir	12	13	14 8:00 - 11:00 am Food Pantry open
15 Christmas Program 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:00 am Gathering in Fellow- ship Hall 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	16 6:45 pm Yoga 7:30 pm Dartball Church Office Closed	17 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open 6pm Bible Study	18 6:15pm Bells 7:30pm Choir	19 7:00pm Council Meeting	20	21
22 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15 am Adult Bible Study 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	23 6:45 pm Yoga 7:30 pm Dartball	24 Christmas Eve Worship 6:00 pm 10:00pm Church Office Closed	25 Church Office Closed	26 Church Office Closed	27 Church Office Closed	28
29 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15 am Adult Bible Study 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	30 6:45 pm Yoga 7:30 pm Dartball	31 Church Office Closed	1 Church Office Closed	2 Church Office Closed	3	4

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
PO Box 344
Pemberville, OH 43450

*Return service requested
Dated material. Do not delay*

A large stained glass window depicting the Last Supper serves as the background for the lower half of the page. It shows Jesus seated at a table with his twelve apostles. Jesus is on the right, wearing a blue robe with a red sash. The apostles are on the left, wearing various colored robes. The table is set with bread, wine, and other items. The background of the stained glass is a warm, golden-brown color.

Worship

9:00 AM

**In person in the sanctuary and
streaming on Facebook and YouTube**

11:30

Broadcast on 99.1 FM