



BETHLEHEM STAR



NEWSLETTER OF BETHLEHEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PEMBERVILLE, OHIO

Pastor's Message

By Pastor Tim Philabaum - February 2026

Ah, in the glory of February we see God's paintbrush slowly turn from white and hues of brown into beginnings of other colors. The promise of spring sings to us, declaring the glory of God through all creation. What a gift!

The middle weekend of this month offers two festivals on which to hang this part of the season. St. Valentine is remembered on the 14th. As this Christian was being taken to be killed because of his faith in Jesus, he sent a "love note" to his special friend. We give such notes not realizing the depth of emotion and faith that Valentine had. May we also give such witness to the love of Jesus!

Sunday the 15th dawns and in worship we will witness the Transfiguration of Jesus, as Peter, James, & John witness what the glory of God looks like, streaming from His very presence. That glory shines yet in



God's gift of creation, and in the loving presence of God's people.

So, we center ourselves this month in the very presence of love, expressed by Valentine and poured out by our Lord, Jesus. And we pray.

Just a few days after this momentous weekend, Lent begins. On Wednesday, Feb 18, you are invited at 11am and 7pm to begin your Lenten Fast, to have ashes imposed upon you (*remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return*), to hear the awesome word of grace,

and to receive the presence of Jesus in Holy Communion. For the next 40 days we will prepare our hearts for the remembrance of our Lord's death and resurrection.

The Pembroville Clergy have chosen "The Lord's Prayer" as our theme for this year's Lenten series. Each Wednesday after "Ash," both at 11am and 7pm, at Bethlehem, one of our congregations will lead us together in worship and an understanding of one of the petitions of the Prayer. That congregation will also provide the meal (6pm) before the evening worship.

This short month is packed with the grace of God. May February be a month for you in which you understand that love in your life, and through your living and prayer and service offer that love to those around you.

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President

Luann Snyder

Vice-President

Susie Rahe

Treasurer

Kelli Young

Secretary

Shelly Albright

220 Cedar Street

PO Box 344

Pemberville, OH 43450

419-287-4182

bethlehempemberville.org

Office Hours:

Mon. - Thurs.

9:00am - 2:00pm

Friday: 9:00am-Noon

If you need to update your contact information including if you have a PO Box, please call the office

2026 Council Members

President

Luann Snyder

Vice President

Susie Rahe

Secretary

Shelly Albright

Treasurer

Kelli Young

Trustees

Dean Schuerman

Aaron Marten

Daniel Smith

Deacons

Corey Bettenbrock

Dan Rife

Andrew Krais

Andrew Derr

Elders

Willie Fisher

Ken Gerwin

In Loving Memory

IN MEMORY OF RUTH WALTERS

Carolyn Borcharding
Wayne & Dolly Buchman
Bob & Joanne Bruning
Willie & Wendy Fisher
Dan Gerwin
Evelyn Gerwin
Ken & Bev Gerwin
Tim & Gail Gerwin
Roger & Teri Hansen
Dave & Deb Helm
Melvin Karns



Ray Kohlenberg
Cathy Kutzli
Matt & Marlene Myer
Terry & Sharon Nigh
Brian & Denise Pickerel
Steve & Nancy Rife
Faye Schuerman
Tim & Becky Schult
Luann Snyder
Janet Witker
Jim & De Witker

Climate Weather

As we enter the winter season, we want to ensure everyone is informed about our inclement weather policy and knows what to expect should hazardous conditions arise.

Level 2 Weather Advisory - If Wood County is placed under a Level 2 snow emergency the church will remain open for those who can travel safely. Please use your best judgment and do not take unnecessary risks on the roads. Church services will proceed for those able to attend.

Level 3 Weather Emergency - If a Level 3 emergency is declared, all church services and activities will be cancelled. In those situations, local authorities prohibit non-emergency travel, and your safety is our top priority. We will do our best to share updates regarding any closure.

BY THE NUMBERS

From The Financial Office

January, 2025	Beg Balance	Deposits	Expenses	Balance
Operating	\$235,489.63	\$31,821.93	\$18,767.65	\$248,543.91
Memorial	\$31,654.68			\$31,654.68
Benevolence	\$18,520.04	\$8,972.00	\$480.00	\$27,012.04
Outreach	\$61,473.70	\$5,150.83	\$4,188.59	\$62,435.94
Pass Through				

Tithe.ly QR Code

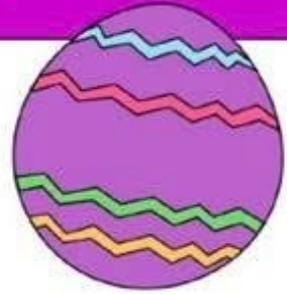
Anyone is welcome to make a one time or reoccurring donation by using the QR code that links to Tithe.ly, Bethlehem's online giving portal. When you scan the QR code, you will be required to set up an account, which only takes a few minutes. There is a small transaction fee for the use of the app. The app will prompt you to indicate your choice to pay the transaction fee or have it deducted from your donation. Thank you for supporting the ministries at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.



Bethlehem Preschool

Looking for preschool or extended care for your child? Visit Bethlehem Preschool website to get more information!
<http://www.bethluthpreschool.org/>

Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool



19th Annual

Spring Fling

Raffle

Craft Show and Fundraiser

Silent
Auctions

Saturday, March 21st, 2026
10am-4pm

50/50
Drawing!



Bethlehem Lutheran Church
420 Cedar Street, Pemberville, OH
Fellowship Hall



Special Guest

Easter Bunny

Spring Photos

5x7 with \$5 donation
11am-2pm



Fun for the Entire Family!

Mission Honduras

In Honduras!

Annual Meeting

The Annual meeting will be held February 8 following worship.

Altar Flowers

The cost of Altar Flowers have went up in price starting January 2026. They will now be \$38.

JANUARY COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



Visitors: Denise Corns-Preschool, Teri Hansen-Preschool liaison, Russ Eby, Matt Meyer (former trustee) Joe Scribrny (unable to attend but will keep us informed when he gets more information about organ repairs)

Call to order and Opening Prayer: President Luann Snyder called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. She gave the opening prayer.

Approval of agenda:

Added to new business:

1. Scouts
2. Representatives to Synod Assembly
3. Broken sign in front yard

Willie Fisher made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Ken Gerwin. Motion carried.

Denise Corns addressed Council to review information and documentation related to improvements to the preschool area completed over the last several years. She shared a list of preschool-funded upgrades and noted that the Preschool has also provided financial support to the Church to help offset costs associated with Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, utilities, custodial services, and restroom supplies. Concerns regarding communication related to maintenance and facility needs were discussed, and a suggestion was made to implement a written maintenance request form to help improve clarity and consistency going forward

Introduction of new Council members.

Be aware of Covenant of Conduct that is in the back of our binder.

Approval of minutes from December 18, 2025 meeting.

Motion accepted to approve minutes from Corey Bettenbrock, seconded by Willie Fisher. Motion carried.

Devotions:

January devotions: Susie Rahe

February Devotions: Corey Bettenbrock

Reports of officers:

1. Pastor's report: Pastors report reviewed. Pastor Tim also informed council of his change in schedule, where he will only at Bethlehem two Sunday's month once he returns from Honduras.
2. Treasure's report: Report reviewed
3. Trustee report: The maintenance punch list was distributed, reviewed, and updated to reflect completed items. Matt Meyers gave an update regarding the upcoming window replacement project and plans for sealing of the parking lot in the spring.

A motion was made by Dean Schuerman to accept the officer's reports. It was seconded by Willie Fisher. Motion passed.

JANUARY COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



Committee Reports:

1. Strategic plan – Luann Snyder has updated this.
New member welcoming bags made and distributed to new members last week.
Enhancing member engagement – Would like to focus on youth involvement.
Ensuring a vibrant future-different ideas discussed
Success Matrix – community outreach is good
Enhancing member engagement – new member questionnaire
2. Long range planning – Luann Snyder
Next meeting is Jan 27
3. Call committee- Susie Rahe
Unfortunately, nothing to report
Motion to accept committee reports by Willie Fisher, seconded by Dean Schuerman. Motion carried.

Old Business:

1. Annual meeting – February 8, 2026 after church.
2. Report from legal counsel – Luann & Susie met with Doug Ruck about establishing a “Governance Agreement” between the church and the preschool. This will be done in partnership with the Preschool Director, and will define roles and responsibilities going forward. A motion was made by Willie Fisher to proceed with a second by Pastor Tim, motion carriers.
3. Security system - Council engaged in extensive discussion regarding a security system for the Preschool. A floor plan was distributed outlining potential door installations on the second and third floors. Discussion included whether an architect would be required, the possibility of conducting a comprehensive security system assessment, and whether the evaluation should focus solely on securing the Preschool area or the entire church facility. Council agreed that a security assessment and determination of the most appropriate scope must be completed before proceeding further. Council also approved allowing the Preschool to begin fundraising for the security project, provided that all donations are properly tracked by the Preschool.

Andrew Derr made a motion to allow the preschool to start fundraising efforts. Corey Bettenbrock seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

1. Scouts – Russ Eby made a presentation to inform Council that the Scouts have authorized the formation of a family troop, allowing boys and girls troop to merge into one. Russ stated this is how they have been functioning and would like to move forward merging Troop 344 (boys) and Troop 9344 (girls) into a family troop. Council needs to approval and signatures are required to authorize the change and to complete the annual charter renewal by January 31, 2026.

Motion to approve the Family Troop made by Ken Gerwin, with a second by Dean Schuerman, motion carries.

Russ also advised Sunday February 15th will be Boy Scout Sunday, and shared how many have earned the “God & Family” award.

2. Synod Assembly Meeting, May 30 at St Marks. - Susie Rahe volunteered, Steve Rife was nominated to attend.

Shelly Albright made a motion to accept those reps for the assembly, Dan Rife seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. The church sign on Cedar Street is in need of repair. Will talk about that at the long range committee meeting.

Next meeting: February 19, 2026

Adjournment, followed by the Lord’s Prayer

Motion for adjournment made by Dean Schuerman, seconded by Kelly Young. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelly Albright
Council Secretary



Happening This Month: February

February Mission Action Project: Luther Home of Mercy

The Luther Home of Mercy is a 129 bed intermediate care facility for the developmentally handicapped.

Items needed:

- Construction paper (all colors)
- Crayons
- Coloring books (large pictures)
- Washable markers
- Stickers
- Seasonal window clings
- Adult winter hats and gloves
- Easy board games
- New stationary and stamps



Praying...

FOR HEALING AND HOPE

Terri Reinhart, David Randall, Randi Parton (friend of Lois Hansen), Jean Ladd,

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, Grace's Place, Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool & Extended Care, WCOAA Senior Care, Cub Scout Pack 344, Scouts BSA Troops 344 and 9344

FOR ALL YOUTH

FOR OUR MILITARY MEN & WOMEN

Food Pantry Needs Your Help

Please help the Food Pantry stock these needed items in

February:

- **Rice-A-Roni**
- **Spaghetti Sauce**
- **Soup**
- **Kleenex**
- **Body Wash (M or W)**

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

Pat Cline
Trina Karns

Altar Guild

Joanne Busdeker
Teri Hansen

Office Window

Leslie Shiffler

Service Org (Funerals)

Faye Schuerman
Trina Karns

Help Members Celebrate Their 80+ Birthday!

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

- ♦ 2/10 Gary Korn
- ♦ 2/12 Doris Oberst
- ♦ 2/13 Donald Gerke
- ♦ 2/19 Jean Ladd

If your 80+ birthday is not included here, please contact the office at

419-287-4182 so we can update our records.



T H A N K Y O U



December 23, 2025



Bethlehem Lutheran Church 1 * 118
320 Cedar St
PO Box 344
Pemberville, OH 43450-0344

Dear Friends,

During this holiday season, we want to thank you for your generous gift of \$239.11, made on 12/18/2025. Your kindness brings encouragement and hope to men and women who are working hard to change their lives.

For many of our guests, the holidays can be a difficult time - a reminder of loss, loneliness, or separation from loved ones. But because of your compassion, they are finding more than a warm meal and a safe place to rest. They're discovering dignity, belonging, and a renewed sense of purpose.

Your support helps provide nutritious meals, safe shelter, clean clothing, and opportunities for life transformation through education, job training, and faith-based care. Every act of generosity-like yours-helps open doors to stability and restores hope for the future.

Thank you again for sharing your blessings this holiday season. You are making a real and lasting difference.

Grace and Peace,

Ann Ebbert
CEO

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE WONDERFUL CARE PACKAGE! IT REALLY MADE MY DAY TO OPEN IT AND SEE ALL THE THOUGHTFUL THINGS YOU PICKED OUT. YOUR PRAYERS AND KIND WORDS TRULY MEAN A LOT. I AM INCREDIBLY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND FOR KEEPING SERVICE MEMBERS IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS. IT REMINDS ME HOW LUCKY I AM TO HAVE SUCH A GREAT COMMUNITY BACK HOME.

THANK YOU AGAIN!
MRS JOHN ROGERS, USMC



Bethlehem Lutheran
Church Members,

Thank-you for your continued support of Lifewise Academy throughout 2025. We appreciate your support as Lifewise continues to grow and spreads God's word.

Kay Burrell
Volunteer
12.30.25

KIDS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Lucas Gerwin have been playing Eastwood Youth Basketball

Landry Gerwin have been playing Eastwood Youth Basketball.

Josie Gerwin played Eastwood fall soccer.

FEBRUARY

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 6:45 pm Yoga 7:30 pm Dartball	3 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open	4 6:30 pm Bells 7:30 pm Choir	5	6	7 8:00 - 11:00 am Food Pantry open
8 Annual Meeting 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15am Sunday School 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	9 6:45 pm Yoga 7pm Priscilla Circle 7:30 pm Dartball	10 9:00 am Knitting 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open 6pm Bible Study	11 6:30-8pm Cub Scouts 6:30 pm Bells 7:30 pm Choir	12 6-7:30 pm Girl Scout Meeting	13	14
15 Scout Sunday 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15am Adult Bible Study 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	16 6:45 pm Yoga 7:30 pm Dartball	17 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open 6pm Bible Study	18 6-7pm Girl Scout Meeting 6:30 pm Bells 7:30 pm Choir	19 7pm Council Meeting	20	21 8:00 - 11:00 am Food Pantry open
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 9:00 am Knitting 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open 6pm Bible Study	25 6:30 pm Bells 7:30 pm Choir	26	27	28

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
PO Box 344
Pemberville, OH 43450

*Return service requested
Dated material. Do not delay*



Worship

9:00 AM

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

11:30

Broadcast on 99.1 FM