



BETHLEHEM STAR

NEWSLETTER OF BETHLEHEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PEMBERVILLE, OHIO



Pastor's Message

By Pastor Tim Philabaum - September 2026

One day, some 2000+ years ago, a man named Matthew was collecting taxes for the Roman Government. Tax Collectors were not very popular in Judea because the Judeans did not want their money going to an oppressive government. Men like Matthew, a Judean, was stigmatized because he was working "for the enemy, Rome."

But on that day, we are told, Jesus walked by and said, "Follow me." Matthew left his tax booth, got up, and followed. My assumption is that Jesus had already been by Matthew, or that Matthew knew about Jesus from the word that was spreading about Him. But Matthew just leaves his job behind and follows Jesus.

I like to stop in this part of the story, because Matthew is just one of us. Jesus did not choose the most religious people, or the most wealthy, or the most honored, or the most popular. Rather His gathering was rather rag-tag, and Matthew fit right in. When Jesus calls you and me to follow, to take up our cross, it is not because we are in the "in-group" or in any exalted form.



Rather He calls each of us, we who are full of rebellion and sin. He calls us to follow just because He loves us, and wants us to be with Him, living in that love, and as disciples to make disciples. Each of us have a calling. Each of us are loved and gifted. Each of us are made worthy because of the cross and empty tomb of Jesus! Alleluia! Now, back to the story:

For several years, three according to John, Matthew and the disciples (both men and women) traveled with Jesus, listening to His teaching, being amazed at His miracles, basking in His love. As we know, there Matthew was, at the Last Supper, as Jesus connected

the bread and wine to His own to-be broken body and spilled blood. There Matthew was, hiding with the rest of the disciples as Jesus died and was buried. And then his presence after the Resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit compelled Matthew to follow, to teach, and to die. Part of his ministry was to recording of the life and ministry of Jesus, a Gospel which was placed first in the New Testament collection.

After Pentecost, Matthew traveled, preaching and teaching of the love of Jesus, until, as tradition states, he was martyred in Ethiopia, remembered each September 21.

So, siblings in Christ, as we enter into September we carry the recorded faith of one of our brothers, Matthew, who followed, who taught, who was faithful. May you and I, in our own way and giftedness, also follow, and teach, and love, for the same Jesus loves us and calls us to make disciples. Blessings to you in your ministry!

Table of Contents

Pastor's Message	Pg. 1
Bible Study.....	Pg. 1
Bethlehem Apparel.....	Pg. 1
Holy Hoedown.....	Pg. 2
Financial Office Numbers	Pg. 2
Tithe.ly QR Code	Pg. 2
Boy/ Cub Scouts	Pg. 3
Mission Honduras	Pg. 4
Mission Action.....	Pg.5
Food Pantry Needs	Pg.5
Praying.....	Pg.5
Serving in Worship.....	Pg.5
80+ Birthdays	Pg.5
Thank Yous	Pg.6
Kid's Achievements.....	Pg.7
Calendar	Pg.8

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220 Cedar Street

PO Box 344

Pemberville, OH 43450

419-287-4182

bethlehempemberville.org

Office Hours:

Mon. - Thurs.

9:00am - 2:00pm

Friday: 9am-12pm

If you need to update your contact information including if you have a PO Box, please call the office or email office@bethlehempemberville.org

September Bible Study

This month Pastor Tim will be offering his Tuesday, 6pm Bible Study only on September 1, 8, 15.

During these three sessions we will study Paul's letter to the Philippians. The Bible Study will then commence again on October 13.

Bethlehem Apparel

Bethlehem apparel is available! Choose from T-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, and more in a variety of colors and styles. Visit the online store with the link or QR code:

https://stores.inksoft.com/bethlehem_lutheran_church_/shop/home
to browse the selection and place your order today!



Bethlehem invites the Pemberville Community to

Holy Hoedown

Enjoy a fun & relaxed community event at no charge

Sunday, September 20, 2026
4-7 p.m.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
220 Cedar Street, Pemberville, OH
Church Parking Lot

Donations of nonperishable foods accepted for Eastwood Community Food Pantry and Back Pack Ministry



Food: **Soup Cook-off**
(Small prizes for top 3 winning soups)
Hot Dogs
Assorted chips
Pie
Cookies and Donut holes
Assorted beverages



Kids Zone: Games for the children

Adult Zone: Corn hole, music, karaoke

Bring lawn chairs for seating

Planned by Bethlehem Lutheran Church Women

BY THE NUMBERS

From The Financial Office

July, 2026	Beg Balance	Deposits	Expenses	Balance
Operating	\$219,551.48	\$33,897.53	\$39,062.50	\$214,386.51
Memorial	\$37,274.13	\$770.00	\$1,966.57	\$36,077.56
Benevolence	\$42,634.04	\$1,461.00	\$29,498.00	\$14,597.04
Outreach	\$117,839.79	\$6,920.55	\$60,149.93	\$64,610.41

** Endowment Funds Proceeds were distributed in July. It is reflected in the Benevolence and Outreach Expenses.

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.



Scouting Adventures continue for the Pack & Troop

By Russ Eby, Charter Org Rep for the Pack & Troop

Spring and summer continued to be busy for Cub Scout Pack 344 and Troop 344. Pack 344 ended the 2025-2026 program year with their annual Blue & Gold Banquet. The banquet included a potluck lunch, rank presentations and God & Me religious award presentation. The Blue & Gold concluded with the Arrow of Light crossover ceremony celebrating the transition of the AOL Scouts from the Pack to the Troop. During the summer, the Pack hosted a Fishing Derby that incorporated numerous family ponds in the Pemberville area. In July, some of the Cub Scouts attended Cub Day Camp hosted by Eagle Bay District at White Star Park in Gibsonburg. Activities included fishing, shooting sports, BMX, woodworking and more!

The Troop held their annual Iron Chef campout in April. This campout had scouts competing against each other in a dutch oven cooking competition with judges selecting the winner. In May, the Troop had their Baden-Powell campout where new scouts worked on activities to complete requirements for their Scout and Tenderfoot ranks. The Troop once again attended week-long Scout Summer Camp in June at Camp Berry in Findlay. Scouts had the opportunity to complete merit badges, participate in fun activities in the evening and make lifetime memories. The Troop won the camp gateway competition and cardboard canoe race. In July, some members of the Troop went on a 10-day high adventure trip to Desolation Wilderness in California. This trip included backcountry hiking and camping as well as a whitewater rafting excursion. The Troop ended the summer with volunteering and a fundraiser. Scouts and leaders volunteered to run two water stations and the finish line for the 5-Miler race. The next morning, the Troop had their annual Pancake Breakfast fundraiser. Thank you to everyone who came out to support the Troop. The funds from this event will help reduce activity costs and purchase needed Troop equipment.

The Pack will begin the 2026-2027 program year in early September with a Pack meeting at Harrison Park that will feature outdoor activity stations. The Troop started meeting in late August with a planning meeting to determine activities for the next program year. Activities being planned include skiing, disc golf, swimming and numerous campouts.



Mission Honduras:



During our brigade last month, our team provided 230 families with filter checks and clean-water education during our five brigades. During the brigades, I asked several families how the filters have impacted their health. One mother shared that her children rarely experience upset stomachs, loss of appetite, or cramping since receiving their filter two years ago. Another mother explained that her family's gastrointestinal issues nearly disappeared after they began using their filter. She admitted she later stopped using it because she wasn't convinced the filter was responsible for the improvement. Within weeks, her family's symptoms returned—then quickly subsided again once they resumed using the filter. An older gentleman responded with a huge smile and a “thumbs up.”

Two of our brigades were held in partnership with Honduras Health Horizons (H3), one of our partner brigades. Dr. Ted Lee, coordinator of H3 and a microbiology professor at SUNY Fredonia, has worked closely with us since 2022. He and his graduate students have been following the efficacy of our filters over time as well as evaluating and developing protocols for caring for the filters. For example, although Sawyer International recommends a dilute bleach solution for sterilizing the filters, Ted's testing showed that bleach damages the filter's tubules and shortens their lifespan. This summer, his lab identified a better method: a simple 10-minute vinegar soak. Vinegar does not harm the filter and significantly reduces the number of bacteria present. Due to his findings, every filter during our August brigade received a full “deep clean” using this new vinegar protocol.

Looking ahead, we will leave for our January brigade on Friday afternoon, January 22nd and return on Tuesday, February 2. You do have the the option of returning on Saturday, January 30th. I hope to distribute filters to 300-350 new families during our January brigade. If you would like to join our brigade, please let me know.

Thank you for your support of this ministry and all you do the families in rural Honduras. Darla





Happening This Month: September

September Mission Action Project: Haiti Mission International of America

Items Needed:

- New children's underwear
- Match Box cars
- String back packs
- Pencils and pencil sharpeners

Please place items in the September Mission action room.

- **Sponsor a child for \$100 a year.** You choose your child and keep his/her picture. We encourage you to pray for your child.
- **Give up one small luxury a week.** For only 25 cents you can feed a child for a day. It only takes \$75 to feed the whole school for a day.
- **Host a Circle of Life Jewelry Party.** Invite your friends for a fun evening and introduce them to our products and projects.
- **Make a monthly commitment to MIA.** Many people have committed to a monthly amount making it easier for MIA to plan expenses. Talk to Jay if you want suggestions on how to do this.
- **Collect needed items.** We are always in need of match box cars, new children's underwear, string back packs, pencils and pencil sharpeners. Please place items in the bin in the Mission Action Room (111).

Food Pantry Needs Your Help

Please help the Food Pantry stock these needed items in

September:

- ♦ Ramen Noodles
- ♦ Pancake Mix
- ♦ Maple Syrup
- ♦ Canned Fruit
- ♦ Toilet Paper
- ♦ Body Wash

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.

*When making out checks for the food pantry please make them out to Pemberville Food Pantry. This is a community food pantry not just Bethlehem's.

Serving this month in Worship and Beyond

Altar Flowers
Leslie Shiffler

Altar Guild
Marlene Hoodlebrink
Sue Gerke

Office Window
Deb Helm

Service Org (Funerals)
Sue Gerke
Cyndi Walters

Help Members Celebrate Their 80+ Birthday!

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

- ♦ 9/2 Sue Gerke
- ♦ 9/3 Carolyn Borcharding

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

Praying...

FOR HEALING AND HOPE

Randi Parton (friend of Lois Hansen), Nancy Rife, Carolyn Borcharding

FOR OUR BISHOPS

Yehiel Curry 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

THANK YOU



August 12, 2026

Thank You

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
PO Box 344
Pemberville, OH 43450-0344

Dear Bethlehem Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your incredible gift of \$16,000.00 to the ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving."
(Colossians 2:6-7)

As people of faith, we have seen abundant blessings made known through the life and death of Jesus Christ, and we are invited to share these blessings with our neighbors. Through your gifts you equip the ministries of the ELCA to share the good news of Jesus Christ near and far.

Through your generosity, you join the church as we enact our vision of a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. Your gifts embolden this church to respond to the call of the Holy Spirit by equipping leaders, accompanying neighbors and empowering thriving ministries.

As we strive to be faithful stewards of God's abundant grace, your generosity makes a difference. We are so thankful for your leadership and your continued prayers for this church.

Abounding in thanksgiving,

Rachel Wind
Rachel Wind
Executive for Development

P.S. Please see the reverse side of this letter for your receipt.

*Thank you,
friends at
Bethlehem!*



Luther Home of Mercy

5810 N. Main Street • P.O. Box 187 • Williston, Ohio 43468-0187
(419) 836-7741 FAX (419) 972-4357
A Ministry to persons with developmental disabilities - Since 1928

Terri Rodriguez
President and CEO

Rev. Donald L. Wukotich
Director Emeritus

July 13, 2026

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
220 Cedar Street, PO Box 344
Pemberville, OH 43450

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your recent gift of \$870.00 in support of Luther Home of Mercy.



Our ministries are focused on enriching lives and individual abilities and your support makes that possible. The weekly craft box is a favorite activity for residents who call our main campus home. As you can tell by Rosie's beautiful smile – the *happy hands* craft – was a big hit!

Thank you for bringing joy to Rosie and all of those we're fortunate to serve and support at our residential facility, at our day programs and in our community homes.

Sincerely,

Megan
Megan O'Brien
Vice President

*We are so very
thankful for
your faithful
friendship!*

*Thank you
Melissa*

Melissa Gregg
Director of Mission Advancement

Donation to Luther Home of Mercy Foundation Amount: \$870.00 Date: 7/2/2026

Thank you for your donation to Luther Home of Mercy Foundation, a registered exempt organization as described by the Internal Revenue Code, using EIN #34-1680157. No goods or services were provided in return for this contribution. Therefore, we ask that you retain this acknowledgement letter as a record of your contribution. This gift could be deductible according to 2026 IRS guidelines for charitable giving.



LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES of Northwestern Ohio

Strengthening People in Body, Mind and Spirit

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
2149 Collingwood Blvd. • Toledo, Ohio 43620-1696
(419) 243-9178 • FAX (419) 243-4450
E-mail: toledo@lssnwo.org
www.lssnwo.org

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church
220 Cedar St.
Pemberville, OH 43450

Dear Friends at Bethlehem Lutheran Church;

We all love a celebration, whether it be a graduation, wedding, birthday party or at this time of the year, the 4th of July! Take a minute to think about the planning of such occasions, the things that make it comfortable, fun and inviting for your guests. What if a celebration was the last thing on your mind? What if the first and foremost was, "When am I going to eat next?", "What will I feed my children?", "Where is my family going to sleep tonight?", or "How can I get through this grief?"

At Lutheran Social Services we hear these questions every day, which is why we are so thankful for donors like you! Thank you for your gift of \$950.00, received on 7/6/2026 and serving LSS Ministries. With each donation you are helping a child, a family or a senior citizen get one step closer to a more sustainable life. We couldn't do this work without you!

We all enjoy a wonderful celebration, today let us celebrate your generosity!

Thank you,

Traci
Traci Jaksetic
Vice President

Thank you!



KIDS ACTIVITIES



SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 6 pm Bible Study	2	3	4	5
6 10:30 am Community Worship 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	7 6:45 pm Yoga	8 9:00 am Knotting 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open 6 pm Bible Study	9	10	11	12 8:00 - 11:00 am Food Pantry open
13 Rally Day 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15am Sunday School 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	14 6:45 pm Yoga	15 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open 6 pm Bible Study	16	17 7pm Council Meeting	18	19
20 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15am Sunday School 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	21 6:45 pm Yoga	22 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open	23	24	25	26 8:00 - 11:00 am Food Pantry open
27 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	28 6:45 pm Yoga	29 9:00 am Knotting 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open	30			

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