



September 2026

Volume 45 Number 9

Bethlehem Star

A publication of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Grand Marais, MN

Bethlehem's Homecoming is Sunday, October 4th!

This is a special event at Bethlehem where we invite all of our friends and members who have called Bethlehem their home to come back and worship together. This will also kick off our Children, Youth, and Family Ministries for the fall. After worship we'll head out to the church lawn for a picnic of walking tacos, inflatables for kids, and games for everyone.

There are a few special things happening at Homecoming:

- ⇒ **A special blessing for our snowbirds and seasonal members who will be leaving for the south.**
- ⇒ **Installation of our CYF volunteers.**
- ⇒ **Sign ups and info for Bible Studies, last minute registration for CYF, and more!**

Invite your friends and family to come up and see the fall colors, and then worship with us on Sunday. It will be a great celebration, and a time for everyone to reconnect. See you on October 4th!

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Calvin Konop

Palestinian Olive Wood & Felted Products for Sale

At the Synod Assembly this year there were two vendors represented from Palestine selling artisan goods. We learned at the Assembly that the Palestinian economy relies heavily on tourism, but with the current conflicts happening in the Middle East tourism is at a rare low. Different businesses sell their olive wood products through the internet to people all over the world, who then sell them to support their Palestinian neighbors.

Bethlehem purchased many different olive wood and felted products for sale. These products come from Bethlehem, in Palestine. The olive wood products are made by artists who have learned the ancient tradition of olive wood carving.

The felted items come from a really cool organization called l'Arche Community. This was a community that originally started in France to care for people with profound disabilities that had been neglected by their families or their community. These communities sprung up all over the world, including in Palestine. The l'Arche community in Palestine teaches their residents to make felted works of art to support their community.

The products sell for a wide range of prices, and many are Christmas themed (coming from Bethlehem, most of their products are appropriately Christmas themed). The prices are listed on the products. If you have any questions about the products, what they mean or represent, please ask Pastor Calvin or Sue Hennessy. We'll do our best to answer your questions.

Checks can be made payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church (or BLC), and cash is also accepted. We're working on a Venmo for the church, a QR code will be at the display when our Venmo is up and running.

Thank you all for supporting our neighbors across the world!



Fisherman's Picnic Worship August 2nd at Harbor Park



WATER DAY - PERFECT SUMMERTIME FUN





Devotions

By Pastor Calvin Konop

*Thy word is a lamp
unto my feet,
and a light
unto my path.*

Psalms 119:105

God's word is a gift to humanity that lights up the darkness. Whatever we are experiencing, we can find the promises of God in the scriptures that bring comfort, joy, peace, and grace to each of us.

Sometimes the Bible can seem daunting or inaccessible, and so we avoid reading it. But God's Word is something that is alive, not just stagnant words on the page. It inspires questions and conversations with others. It shapes the way we view the world. It gives clarity during times of confusion, and rest during times of trial.

If you ever feel like you're in a time of darkness, turn to God's word to be the light to your path.

Prayer: God, thank you for the gift of your Word. Give me the courage to open my Bible and read your words on the page. Open my mind and my heart to hear your Word, and teach me what you want me to understand. Be the light in my life that guides my path. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

"Nice to hear" from Pastor Calvin:

When I was greeting folks outside, a mother daughter duo walked in and I greeted them. They said they were on vacation and God brought them to our church. Kathy Johnson met them and chatted and they came up for Coffee An' afterwards. I sat with them and Kathy for a little while and they said, "Being here felt like home." They asked for recommendations for "churches like this" near them.



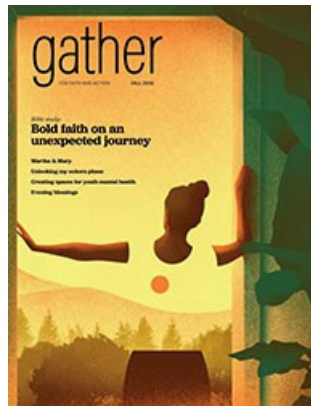
Mission of the Month

Hamilton Habitat

*My people will abide in a peaceful habitation,
in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places. (Isaiah 32:18)*

As we prepare to care for our church home during "God's work. Our hands." Sunday (September 13), our Mission of the Month will support affordable housing for our Cook County neighbors.

Hamilton Habitat is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization building houses that make home ownership more attainable. Follow along with their progress on Facebook or <https://hamiltonhabitat.wordpress.com/> to learn about their upcoming work, including the "Congo Church Property Projects."



Fall, A Time to Gather

by Joy Oberg

When I received my Fall issue of Gather Magazine, I couldn't wait to find a cozy spot to sit and immerse myself in the articles and stories. What is *Gather*? It's the magazine of Women of the ELCA, and offers a mix of articles, theological reflections, devotions and stories of comfort and challenge. It is also the Bible study guide used for our monthly circle gatherings. Join us this Fall as we study "Bold On Faith an Unexpected Journey." Author and ELCA Pastor Tiffany C. Cheney, "invites us to join the unexpected journeys of three faithful women in Scripture: Hagar, Ruth and Mary Magdalene." There are three sessions, "Encountering God in the Wilderness," "Love and Loyalty, A story of Connection and Courage" and "Claiming Resurrection in Hope."

September 8th at 9:30am kicks off our first gathering for this Fall. We will meet in the church library to explore the lives of these three faithful women and enjoy a light hearted discussion on "Encountering God in the Wilderness." There's always coffee, sometimes treats and time to catch up on everyone's summer and plans for the fall. We only meet once a month on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 9:30-11 am. I invite you to come give it a try. All are welcome!





Jess Christenson, Director

blcyouth@boreal.org ☎ 507-530-2763

Confirmation 2026-27 QR Code:



Sunday School 2026-27 QR Code:



Hello Bethlehem!

I can't believe it but Fall is right around the corner! Things are getting back into the swing of things here at Bethlehem! Registration for Fall Programming is available on our website or you can contact me and I will gladly send out our digital links. I will include QR Codes here in the newsletter as well! These links will include registration forms for Sunday School (for K-2 students) and Confirmation (for 6th -8th graders), more information will be coming soon about Builders Club which will be our Wednesday Afterschool program for 3rd -5th graders.

Sunday School begins on October 4th and Confirmation begins on October 7th. There will be a Confirmation student/parent meeting on Sunday September 27th after worship at 11am down in the Youth Room.

With Fall Programming back in swing, I want to make sure to extend an invite to all of you to join us on a Wednesday evening for time with our community. Our Community Meal is open to everyone at it starts at 5:30. We then have worship together led by the Average Worship Band that starts at 6:00. Confirmation follows from 6:30 – 7:30.

We are kicking off the Fall with our Homecoming Party on October 4th. There will be walking tacos, free Bibles, inflatable bounce houses, games and time with community. We would love to see you to kick off our program year with some fun!

I am so excited to start this new journey with you all.

Peace, Jess Christenson

Notes from Kristin Lindholm, Congregational President

One of my favorite theologians is Frederick Buechner. My brother introduced him to me when I was in my early twenties - and I have always turned to his literature for wisdom. In looking at his devotion for September 1st - he reminds us that we only have one life to live. This is it. He states, "In the entire history of the universe, let alone in your own history, there has never been another just like it and there will never be another just like it again." In some ways, this is a relief, especially if it has been a bad day or week, but I don't think that's what Buechner is getting at here. Regardless of life's events, good or bad, each day has been gifted to us by God. It is up to us to use it for His purpose. I often need this reminder. Let us remember,

This is the day
that the
Lord has made;
Let us
Rejoice
and be glad in it.
Psalm 118:24





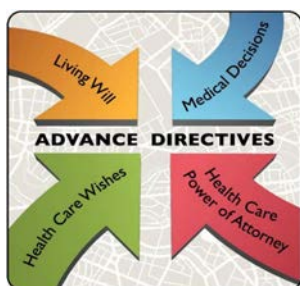
Thank you, Jim Gulstrand for sanding, priming and repainting the door trims on the church.

We appreciate your time and talents!



Rennette Pearse, former resident in Grand Marais who enjoyed quilting with our Quilters, passed away in April 2026. She was living in her home town of New Ulm, MN. Blessings to her family.

Health Care Directive:



Are You Ready?

After my big health scare this summer, I really began to feel guilty that I have never filled out a Health Care Directive. Every time that I've gone to the doctor for the last many years, I've said to myself, "I really have to do that!" Alas, I still haven't. But, I'm one step closer to putting my wishes down officially.

This past week I participated in "Advance Care Planning" workshop by Care Partners at the Cook County Higher Education building. Presenters were Julie Wilson, LGSW, and Barb Bernardy Rose, Retired RN. It was very informative and they provided all the forms and guidance to start the thought process in getting the form complete. Both of these ladies are certified to help with this process, and they are readily available to help you through this process. They can be contacted at Care Partners, 218-387-3788. The office is located at 615 E. Hwy 61, Grand Marais. I encourage you to do this.

A Health Care Directive is for all adults (18 years old and up) and outlines your wants. It helps to avoid confusion at a critical time in your life. Filling out a Health Care Directive provides a

time for you and your family to have real discussions about your wishes and offers the opportunity to discuss various considerations that may affect your life.

Your health care agent, is a person you designate to speak for you **ONLY** when you can't, and is only for medical decisions, not legal or financial decisions. You may designate more than one person as your primary & secondary health care agent. This person(s) communicates your wishes to the medical staff.

A copy should be on file with all your doctors and hospitals. It is important to carry a copy with you in your purse and in your car, and post a copy on your refrigerator. Your health care agent should also have a copy with them.

It is recommended that you review your Health Care Directive at least every 10 years; when relationships change (divorce, etc.); death of someone important to you; a new diagnosis, or with decline or change in condition, capacity or health. Importantly, you should destroy previous versions and distribute new copies to necessary persons/health care facilities.

Give this gift to your loved ones. I have additional forms in my office if you would like to start the process.

Peace, Denise Murray



"This past quarter has revolved around themes of growth and impact at the Violence Prevention Center. Year over year, the number of clients we serve and the services provided continues to grow, and the past four months have been the busiest yet— Providing a total of 248 services to individuals in our community who have experienced violence. At the same time, we've continued to expand our prevention efforts and recently completed a child sexual abuse prevention program called Safe and Strong at the YMCA, which we also hope to partner on with local schools this fall.

The VPC is also currently undergoing an office remodel thanks to funding from The Cook County EDA. The project will create expansion for an additional office, improved confidentiality, and other updates that will allow us to provide additional and improved services. During construction, we have also been generously hosted by **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**, helping us to ensure our work can continue uninterrupted over the past several weeks.

We are incredibly grateful to our supporters— The individuals, businesses, and organizations, who come together to make our work possible each day, and particularly over the VPC's especially busy summer. We couldn't do it without you, thank you for expanding safety and violence prevention in our community!"

Sara Mowchan, Executive Director,
Violence Prevention Center



World Press Institute (WPI) was established in 1961 to strengthen and promote the founding principles and best practices of journalism in the United States and around the world that lead to transparency and accountability of the government and private sectors. It is a private nonprofit organization based in the Twin Cities.

Each year, we bring together 10 professional journalists from all over the world and immerse them in the governance, politics, business, media, journalistic ethics and culture of the United States. Through a demanding, curated schedule in which they journey across the United States, they learn about the roles and responsibilities and evolving business models of the U.S. media, while engaging in the life and times surrounding them.

WPI International Journalists

Community Potluck & Casual

Community Conversation

September 16 @ 6:30-7:30pm

At Bethlehem Lutheran Church— Fellowship Hall

Join us for an evening of cross-cultural exchange and camaraderie at the WPI International Journalist Potluck! This special gathering brings together journalists from around the world and local community members to share stories, ideas, and a meal.

Bring your friends and family, a favorite dish to share, and your curiosity. Please also bring your own beverage, plate, utensils, and serving utensils.

We look forward to sharing this meaningful evening with you!

Learn more about World Press Institute: <https://worldpressinstitute.org/>

SEPTEMBER 2026




Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1 8:30am Staff meeting	2 8:00am Church in Society Meeting NO Text Study	3 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Quilting	4 Clarity Hearing Appts	5
6 NO Choir practice 10:00am Worship	7 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY	8 8:30am Staff meeting 7:00pm Stewardship meeting	9 12:30pm Text Study	10 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 9:30am BLCW Circle & Bible Study	11	12 Installation of Bishop Taryn Montgomery in Duluth
13 GWOH Sunday 8:40am Choir practice 10:00am Worship	14 3:30pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Executive Committee meeting	15 8:30am Staff meeting 6:30pm Worship Planning Meeting	16 12:30pm Text Study 5:00pm International Journalists Dinner	17 8:00am Monthly Council Reports due to office 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Quilting	18 12:00pm Monthly Reports distributed to Council members Clarity Hearing Appts	19
20 8:40am Choir practice 10:00am Worship 2:00pm Care Center Worship Service	21 8:00am Deadline for changes to Council agenda and reports 6:30pm Church Council Meeting	22 8:30am Staff meeting 5:00pm Girl Scouts Newsletter articles due	23 12:30pm Text Study	24 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Quilting	25	26
27 8:40am AVB practice 10:00am Contemporary Worship & Sunday School 11:15am Parent & Student Confirmation Meeting	28 3:30pm Girl Scouts	29 8:30am Staff meeting	30 12:30pm Text Study 5:30pm Spirit of the Wilderness meets in library 7:00pm Jazz Practice	1 Pastor Calvin out of office 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Quilting	2 Pastor Calvin out of office Clarity Hearing Appts	3 Pastor Calvin out of office

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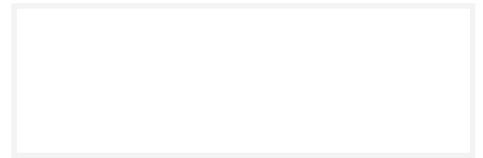
Grand Marais, MN

55604

Belonging to Christ,

Sharing Christ on the

North Shore and beyond.



Member Challenge:



God's work. Our hands.



September 13, 2026

Please join us for a quick lunch following worship and spend a couple of hours doing projects around the church.

VARIOUS PROJECTS MAY INCLUDE CLEANING, ORGANIZING, WEEDING...

Is there something that you see needs to be taken care of? If so, it's your turn to make it happen!

Wear your GWOH t-shirt or get a new one that day.