

BETHLEHEM STAR

God's Call For Our Lives

During the season of Epiphany we did a 4-week sermon series on **God's Call for our lives**. Each Sunday we dove into the scriptures to read what God's Call looked like in the lives of folks centuries ago, and imagined what it might look for us today. It was my hope that through this sermon series you might here from God about the Call God has for you - that the Holy Spirit would lead you into bringing God's Kingdom to earth to people and places that desperately need it.

If you didn't hear from God this Epiphany, don't worry! Sometimes these things take a long time to figure out. For example, I first felt a generic "call to ministry" in middle school, but it took *years* for me to discover that I was called to be a Pastor (not a youth director) in the Lutheran (not the Baptist) church. You, too, may be on a long and winding path to where God is leading you. Enjoy the ride, and keep your eyes peeled for what God is up to in your life!

If you already have a Call from God that you are invested in - good! As many of us know, our Call can change, grow, or look different over time. I hope that this sermon series affirmed the Call that you already have, and gave you some groundwork for the future in case your Call changes.

If you heard from God during the time we did this sermon series, I want you to share it with the people in this congregation. Stories of people hearing from God are encouraging, inspiring, and hopeful. Not only that, but you sharing what you heard and how you heard it will help others to find their Call, too!

Wherever you find yourself (maybe in a place not listed in this newsletter article), "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in God, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

Peace in Christ. *Pastor Calvin Konop*



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

TERESA SHANNON AND
JON GUNDERSON

JOINED BETHLEHEM ON
SUNDAY JANUARY 21, 2024.

WE ARE SO GLAD YOU ARE HERE!



IF YOU MISSED OUR JANUARY NEW MEMBER CLASS & INTRODUCTION TO BETHLEHEM AND ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE... PLEASE CONTACT PASTOR CALVIN OR THE OFFICE, 218-387-2227 OR BIC@Boreal.org

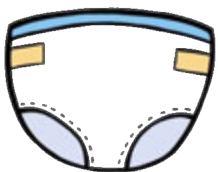


Confirmation Skit Night

Wednesday February 7
7:00pm in the Sanctuary.

All families & members are invited to attend.

(Cookies will be served between 6:30-7:00 pm)



Middle School Diaper Wars! Friday, February 16th 6:30-8pm. Students should invite friends. Also, parents, if you've ever wanted to chuck something at a middle schooler, the diapers are calling your name to be an adult leader. It's lots of fun! Snacks provided. Contact Pastor Calvin to become a leader: blcpastor@boreal.org.



Devotions

By Pastor Calvin Konop

*Faith matures by reaching out,
stretching minds, enlarging hearts,
sharing struggles, living prayer,
binding up the broken parts;
till we find the commonplace
ripe with witness to God's Grace.*

*(Faith Begins By Letting Go,
Verse 3, ACS 1004)*

I love the words of this hymn from our new *All Creation Sings* hymnal. Each of the verses sings about our Call from God to bring God's kingdom into the world's kingdom. The words above are from the final verse of the hymn, which focuses on our outward call to the world.

Here the hymn reminds us that our faith is strengthened by reaching out to others. But that it's not just outreach, it's stretching our minds and enlarging our hearts (what could be called "empathy") - by sharing struggles, living prayer, and binding up the broken parts. Each of these calls to maturing our faith is tied to issues of social justice - helping those who need it, especially the least of these. Learning people's stories, and sharing their struggles rather than throwing money or things at the problems to try to fix them.

We do this not to support any one political party, not to pat ourselves on the back, and certainly not because we think we can fix this world. We are called to this work because this is the work of God's Grace - because the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus not only mirrored this behavior, but called each of us to it as well. May we work together until we can "find the commonplace ripe with witness to God's Grace."

First Communion Classes



For Third Graders and Anyone who missed First Communion Classes during Covid, etc.

Our First Communion Classes will be held on Sundays after service at 11:15am in the Library. Parents and children should attend together, and we will use a program called "A Place for You" through Augsburg Fortress. Each class will be up to 1 hour in length, and the dates of classes are: **February 25, March 3, 10, 17, and 24.**

Our First Communion Service will be on Thursday, March 28th at the Maundy Thursday Service. This will be a live-streamed service and will be saved in our YouTube archive. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Calvin.



No Confirmation Classes During Lent

Beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 14, there will be no Confirmation classes during Lent. (There are still game nights during Lent!) This is an intentional break in the year so that students, leaders, and families can focus on the season of Lent and worship together at our Wednesday service. **Students should still attend service during Lent, and families are encouraged to attend with them.**

"Love the Hub"

Chili Feed Fundraiser

Saturday February 10

11:00 AM–2:00 PM



LENT SERVICES

This year our services will use **Taize** music, which is a contemplative, repetitive worship music with intentional moments of silence throughout the service. Lent is a time of waiting, fasting, and prayer, so this worship style fits perfectly. We are looking forward to worshipping with you all this Lenten season!

BLCW: Come Gather With Us

The BLCW is an inclusive organization of women and some men who's events are usually scheduled and published in the Church monthly newsletter or in the e-weekly publications. We invite you to participate in Everything! No sign-up is necessary. There is a monthly Bible study, Quilting on Thursdays, and as many fun things we can think of to hold, whether for fund-raising or fellowship. *Come, gather with us.*

- Gwen Lenz

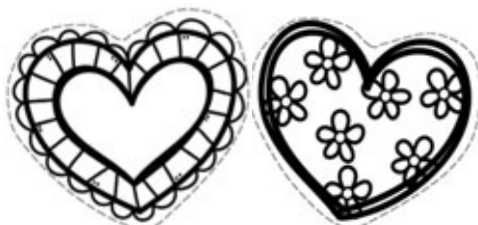
Valentine's Cookie Bake and Pack

The BLCW's Annual Valentine's Cookie Pack and distribution will take place on **Tuesday February 13th**. (Yes, the day **before** Valentines' Day.)

We invite you to make some cookies, bars, or other treats; put 2-3 items in a "snack size" zip bag and label if special in that they are gluten-free or with nuts. We will share these home baked cookies and treats with the Care Center and anyone in our community who could use a little love and support.

If you are able to donate cookies please drop them off at church by Tuesday, February 13th at 10:00 am. We will be packaging them for delivery from 10:00-12:00 and delivering them in the afternoon. There will be coffee, tea and soup to nourish your energy in this fun event.

If you are able to bake some treats it would be greatly appreciated or if you are able to volunteer your time delivering them in the community, let us know! Delivery: drivers are needed to deliver to Care Center, Maple Hill, Devil Track area and 'in town'.



If you know of someone who would love a Valentines treat delivered to them, please leave their name and address with Denise in the office and we'll be sure they're included!

On behalf of the BLCW, Thank You! - Joy Oberg, Circle Chair

Building Muscle

When we are young our muscles work for us without thought. As we mature and age creeps in those muscles are now crying for help. If you have been to therapy you know how much stretching, weights and movement is needed.

Just a reminder to remember to keep your muscles strong especially as we age, and it does work.

**"Get off
your
chair!!"**

- From a
concerned
"maturing"
fellow
member



Five Christian Facts

Submitted by Gwen Lenz

God doesn't tell us to understand. He tells us to trust Him. - Proverbs 3:5-6

God's timing is better than your timing. - Isaiah 55:8-9

If you're worried about it, that's a sign you need to pray about it. - Philippians 4:6-7

Even if other people leave you, God will never abandon you. - Hebrews 13:5

God knows what's best for you. Trust the plan. - Jeremiah 29:11



Mission of the Month

Submitted by John Bragstad

WE ARE FORTUNATE to have the Union Gospel Mission / Twin Cities as Bethlehem's focus for giving in the month in February.

Their stated **Mission:** "To provide Christ-centered, discipleship-oriented pathways and programs that restore dignity and wholeness to men, women, and children."

Their **Vision:** "To see all men, women, and children healthy, whole, and successful through Jesus Christ and the transforming power of the gospel."

I INVITE YOU TODAY to go on their website to see their comprehensive programs: food and shelter, mental health services, addiction recovery, adult education, career services, opportunities to heal physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

This is an exceptional opportunity. I highly recommend this organization, truly an expression of God's Work, Our Hands.

If you need inspiration or more information, go to **Jason's Story** at www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xAk1te7lRo or watch Story of **Gianna** (www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ddsayKDQrc), for personal examples of what Union Gospel Mission does to change lives.

Go to their website at www.ugmtc.org for a comprehensive view of their many programs.

This is a ministry well worth your support. Susan and I contribute to UGM-Twin Cities and feel great to be able to do so. Consider this and give.

To contribute to this mission of the month please note "Union Gospel Mission" on your special offering.



Quick Facts

Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities (UGMTC) opened its doors more than 120 years ago to feed, shelter, and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with Saint Paul dock workers, laborers, and lumberjacks. Through the years, our programming evolved to meet the changing needs of men, women and children experiencing homelessness, hunger and addiction.

Our emergency shelter provides guests with food, shelter and vital care—including mental health services. Once immediate needs are met, our staff walk alongside residents for up to two years, providing Bible study, professional counseling, group therapy, education, mentorship, job skills training, and financial literacy instruction needed to thrive and live successfully in the community.

Impact-At-A-Glance

- 199,814 Hot meals provided for those in need
- 142,890 pounds of food donated
- 99,700 pounds of clothing donated
- 26,071 Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas meals served and delivered
- 5,000+ resident bag lunches prepared
- 4,935 Mental Health Services appointments held on-site
- 3,300+ volunteers in 2022
- 1,500+ Support Services case management appointments
- 1,207 men given emergency shelter & transitional housing
- 367 beds available on Men's Campus
- 174 men found healing and recovery using biblical principles
- 150 women and children found hope and safe shelter



Check on updates of our folks:

- <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/katikristensonstieler> Also:
<https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/katikristensonstieler/support>
<https://backwoodspauli.com/>
<https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/elsa.mayo>
<https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/carlyhawkinson>



Recap

On January 28, 2024, Bethlehem Lutheran Church held its Annual Congregational

meeting. This was a standard business meeting including approval of 2022 Annual Meeting minutes, voting on new council members, and discussions and voting on the 2024 budget.

During Pastor Calvin's address he recognized all of the members who work together to lead the congregation in worship, meals, Coffee An', children & youth volunteers, and so many more! Looking to the future, everything looks very hopeful. We have a strong budget, thanks to your faithful and generous giving. We have had lots of visitors and have received new members. We have meaningful worship services with strong music teams and a great live stream presence. We have bible studies – men's, women's circle and the weekly text study. Pastor Calvin does a monthly service with the Care Center residents and is making home visits. Since he joined Bethlehem, he has led us in new and special services: Pet Blessings, Healing Service, Honoring Veterans, and Confirmation. There are many opportunities that members can participate in, including serving, study and worship.

Changes to Council: Mike Chmelik and Eric Anderson concluded their roles as president and vice president and will remain on the council through then end of their terms. Sue Hennessy and Shawn Swearingen were voted in as new council members. Hilja Iverson has stepped off council due to personal reasons. Hilja will join the Nominating Committee for next year. Mission Endowment Committee: Dianne Peterson's term has expired and Annie DeBevec volunteered to fill the vacant position. At the February council meeting the members will vote on Executive Committee positions.

2024 Budget: Discussions included the increased (doubling) cost of church insurance, which is a problem with churches all over the nation. It's hard to understand that only doubling the insurance cost is a good thing, and Chmelik

stated that if we don't have any claims, we should be able to reduce our costs in the next 5 years or so. This budget includes the hiring of a Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry, and the employment search will begin immediately.

Thank you, 1st & 2nd Volunteers!

Bethlehem received a check for \$5,723 from 1st & 2nd Thrift Store at their Annual Payout Party. Total payout for 2023 was \$117,389.25. The store celebrated reaching the Million-dollar mark of contributing back to this community since starting in July 2007. At the time of this writing a list of the amazing volunteers that donated their hours to Bethlehem isn't available, so **THANK YOU ALL!** Each volunteer hour was worth \$27.30! As a reminder "They are always in need of new volunteers!"...and what a great way to add monies to church programs, meet new people, and have some fun!



Bring your used puzzles to church to **exchange** them with others at Bethlehem. We have a table in the Fellowship Hall, and you can **drop off** some puzzles that you are done with, and/or pick up some **"new to you"** puzzles to enjoy!



February



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 8:40am Choir Practice 10:00am Christian Contemporary Worship Service with the "Average Worship Band" 10:00am Sunday School during Worship	29 3:30pm Girl Scouts	30	31 12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study 5:30pm Pizza Supper 6:00pm Contemporary Worship Service 6:00pm Confirmation	1 8:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 	2 Clarity Hearing Appts.	3
4 8:40am Choir Practice 10:00am Sunday School during Worship 10:00am Worship with Live stream & Choir sings 	5 3:30pm Girl Scouts	6	7 8:00am Church In Society meeting 12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study 5:30pm Taco dinner before worship 6:00pm Contemporary Worship Service 6:00 pm Confirmation 7:00pm Confirmation: Skit Night	8 8:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 2:00pm Esther Circle 	9	10 11:00—2:00 pm Chili Feed at the HUB 
11 8:40am Choir Practice 10:00am Sunday School during Worship 10:00am Worship Service - Live streamed	12 6:30pm Executive Committee 	13	14 Ash Wednesday No Confirmation: Lent 12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study 5:30pm Lenten Supper (Men's Bible Study) 6:00pm Lenten Worship Service	15 8:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 	16 Clarity Hearing Appts. 6:30pm Confirmation: Diaper Wars! 	17
18 Choir sings during worship 8:40am Choir Practice 10:00am Sunday School during Worship 10:00am Worship - Live streamed with Choir 11:15am Worship Volunteer Training 2:00pm Care Center Worship Service	19 6:30pm Church Council Meeting 	20 6:30pm Worship Planning Committee 	21 No Confirmation: Lent 12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study 5:30pm Lenten Supper (Quilters) 6:00pm Lenten Worship Service	22 Newsletter articles due for next edition  8:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting	23	24
25 8:40am Choir Practice 10:00am Christian Contemporary Worship Service with the "Average Worship Band" 10:00am Sunday School during Worship	26 3:30pm Girl Scouts	27	28 No Confirmation: Lent 12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study 5:30pm Lenten Supper * 6:00pm Lenten Worship Service	29 8:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 	1 Clarity Hearing Appts.	2

* We are looking for a team of friends to provide the Lenten Supper on February 28 *

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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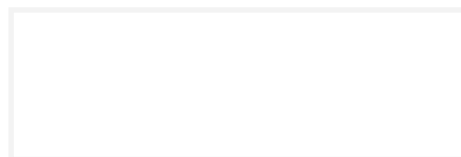
Permit #3

Grand Marais, MN
55604

Belonging to Christ,

Sharing Christ on the

North Shore and beyond.



LENTEN SUPPERS:

We are looking for groups willing to do a Lenten Soup Supper. (Our regular Wednesday meal teams have been given a break because there won't be Confirmation Classes during Lent.)

Dates available: February 28, March 6, 13 & 20. Please contact Pastor Calvin or the office: 218-387-2227, blc@boreal.org

THANK YOU!

Worship Volunteer Training

Have you ever wanted to read the scriptures on Sunday? Have you wondered about serving communion or ushering? Are you a behind the scenes person? Altar guild might be for you!

On Sunday, February 18th at 11:15am we will be having a training in the Sanctuary for Worship Volunteers. At this event we will give you everything you need to feel confident in volunteering. Attending this event does not sign you up to do anything, it is an informative event for curious folks who may want to volunteer in the future.

Contact Pastor Calvin with any questions!

