

Bethlehem Star

August 2023 Volume 42 Number 8

A PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH, GRAND MARAIS, MN

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God
that has been given you in Christ Jesus.*

1 Corinthians 1:3-4

Hello Bethlehem Lutheran Church! I am rejoicing with you as we begin our partnership in ministry together for the Gospel. The words of Paul to the Church at Corinth particularly stick out to me as I think about my gratitude to God for calling Ashley and I to Bethlehem: "I give thanks to my God always for you..."

Ashley, the dogs (Linus and Nigel), and I are all settled into the house and getting used to "being locals." I hear that being a local doesn't officially happen for quite some number of years, but we're too eager to wait for all that time to pass.

As I've been getting settled into the office, I've been doing a lot of reading about the ministries and history of Bethlehem. One of the things that I am looking forward to being a part of is the Children's and Youth Ministries. The pandemic put a halt to a lot of ministries in the church around the world, and I know Bethlehem was not immune to that trend (nor any place). But through it all you have all been faithful in creative ways to live out your baptismal promises that you made for your kids, for yourselves, and for others in the congregation.

It reminds me again of a scripture passage that is so often used for youth and family ministry:

*Train children in the right way,
and when old, they will not stray. Proverbs 22:6*

This fall I am looking forward to a continued partnership between church and family. I'm excited to start meeting again, to try new things, and to be a support system for families as they continue to train up their children in the right way - the way of love, justice, and mercy.

Look for more information coming later this month about meeting times and registration information. And as you wait, please keep these ministries in your prayers.

Peace in Christ.
Pastor Calvin Konop

Devotion

One of the few things I remember about the Greek language I learned in seminary is from a Bible Story about Jesus. The story happens right after he found out that his cousin, John the Baptist, had been executed by the King. He is trying to get away to grieve, to be alone with his 12 best friends - but on his way he sees a crowd. The scriptures say, "He had compassion on them." But that word in Greek has a generic meaning of physically feeling their pain in your gut.

Jesus didn't go away to be alone, but instead was swayed by his empathy and compassion for us dirty, needy, shortsighted humans. He went to them and taught them and healed them, listened to them and loved them.

This is great reminder as we look forward to God's Work Our Hands Sunday. We are called, as followers of Christ, to be Jesus' hands and feet on this earth. To have compassion for others, to have empathy for people.

And ultimately, this story is a great reminder that God has compassion for us. That God literally feels our pain, and selflessly attends to us. God sits with us, listens to us, and loves us.

Thanks
be to
God.



New Member: Boman Lee Smith!



On Sunday July 23rd, we welcomed Boman “Bo” Lee Smith as a new member of Bethlehem by way of Baptism into the body of Christ and into the mission we share.

Bo is the son of Hilja Iverson and Shawn Smith and brother to Clayton and Hattie. His Christian Sponsors are Clayton Smith and Amelia Thomason (Hilja’s sister). Janet Simonen is his maternal grandmother.

(Our) Talented Musicians Return from Lutheran Summer Music Academy

Music camp ended with joyful music from the Festival Choir and Festival Orchestra. Although Paavo left after two weeks due to other commitments, Martine and Naomi continued with two more intense weeks of lessons, recitals, chamber music, choir and orchestra.

Martine’s favorite activities were quartet ensemble, and her elective classes including Intro to Pipe Organs. Naomi enjoyed her conducting class, singing in 2 choirs (gave her “squishy & twinkly feelings”) and performing her organ recital on the huge pipe organ in Valparaiso University’s Chapel of the Resurrection. Family members were thrilled to attend the final concerts and recitals.



Martine Redshaw, Paavo Rova and Naomi Tracy-Hegg at LSM in Valparaiso, IN



Greetings Bethlehem!

You know how weeding is important to help your gardens look neat and thrive? Well, the same is true for libraries! I have volunteered to take on the task of taking care of the library. Part of this job will be what librarians call **WEEDING**. Weeding is defined as the ongoing process of culling or removing resources from the library collection.

One acronym used by librarians in weeding is **M.U.S.T.Y!**

- M** - Misleading or incorrect doctrine
- U** - Ugly, poor physical condition
- S** - Superseded by newer works that circulate
- T** - Trivial, check your mission statement
- Y** - Your shelf space is limited; too many copies

So - **WHY WEED?** Library studies have shown that when collections are organized and culled, checkouts increase! The world has changed greatly in the last 20 years. People are seeking relevancy in their lives.

Rest assured!! I'm **NOT** throwing anything out of historical value to the congregation or denomination!! If there are books by congregation members, they will be saved.

As materials are removed, they will be put on the back table for your perusal and as giveaways. Items not taken will be offered to *Oddz & Endz* or sent to organizations who donate Christian books to prisons, etc. as a mission. For the many old hymnal duplicates or Bibles, members get first choice, but then I will be contacting area churches or organizations that perhaps could use them.

My long-term goal is to update the library to reflect current Lutheran writers, both fiction and non-fiction. I've noticed many great Bible study helps for those of you who like to delve into the Scriptures. Few items are checked out and I'd love to see that change. As I've researched this task, I have found groups who regularly review Christian books and I will share some of their reviews in upcoming articles.

I will be working with Pastor Calvin, and I look forward to hearing from you on authors you would like to see added. Perhaps you have a favorite author that you can't bear to see "weeded"!! Even better, could you help in this task? I would love your assistance! Text or give me a call!!

Yours in Christ, Shelby Anderson
218-387-2698 or cell 218-370-0472



Installation Sunday

August 27, 2024



The bishop is coming! Bishop Amy Odgren will be presiding with Pastor Calvin Konop for Installation Sunday. This is the first time Bishop Amy will worship with us. She will be preaching the message and leading the installation rite for Pastor Calvin.

This will be a special day and a day of celebration. Following worship, we will have a potluck meal and short program on the patio and south lawn of Bethlehem. We will be inviting the community and local clergy to welcome Pastor Calvin and Ashley to our Grand Marais community. Bethlehem will be providing brats and hot dogs with buns and all the condiments. The potluck part will provide the side dishes and desserts.

Mission Of the Month



Bethlehem's Mission of the Month for August will support **School Needs for Local Children.**

It's hard to believe that families will be transitioning to school in such a short time!

We are excited to partner with the HUB/Senior Center to provide financial and material assistance to our local schools. Chris Bautch from the HUB stated that this initiative has been extremely successful. They are excited for our partnership.

Coming Soon: We will be collecting school supplies. The HUB is in the process of putting the list of supply needs together.

Please note, "**School Support**" on your special offering if you would like to support this Mission of the Month. Thanks you for your givings.

In peace, Joni Kristenson, on behalf of the Church in Society Committee



We are Called...



to be Good Stewards of
God's Creation

By Mike Chmelik

“The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world,
and all who live in it.” Psalms 24:1

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden
of Eden to work it and take care of it.” Genesis 2:15

Stewardship is the responsible care and use of our earth's resources, recognizing that all belongs to God. Our Creator has given us the privilege of enjoying and caring for what God has created. Bethlehem takes seriously our calling to be good stewards of God's earth. Our solar panels are just one way we can express that stewardship.

- Bethlehem can show community leadership by promoting green and renewable energy resources and educating our community.
- Bethlehem's unused energy generated by our solar array goes into the electrical grid to be used by others within our community. This allows our electric utilities to not rely as much on expensive backup systems.
- Bethlehem can help keep electrical costs down for our entire community by encouraging and operating renewable energy resources.

On Nov 11, 2022, Bethlehem's 21.5kW solar array was put into operation to provide over 90% of Bethlehem's non-heating electrical needs. Only 6 weeks later on Dec 23, 2022, a powerful winter storm tore 16 of Bethlehem's solar panels off the roof. Frustrated and disappointed, Bethlehem reaffirmed our commitment to renewable energy. The design problems were identified, reengineered, and repaired by TruNorth Solar. On June 27, 2023, the repaired solar array was put back into operation.

Note: There is a laptop computer set up in the narthex that monitors our solar production both instantaneously and historically online. Feel free to take a look at the solar electricity production of our array when you are in the narthex.

Youth & Family



Ministry by Kris Hedstrom

We are excited to welcome Pastor Calvin to our fellowship. He will be an active part of VBS in August. This is a mini-VBS—it will be only 3 days. The schedule is Tuesday–Thursday, August 8–10 from 9–noon. Students will need to bring their own lunch for each day. Please Pre-Register so we have an idea of how many are coming. This is open to children going into 1–5th grade. Middle school students are welcome as helpers. Parents! We welcome your assistance, even if it is only 1 day.



Other programming is in the works: Confirmation for our 9th graders, Confirmation classes for grades 6–8, Holy Moly for our younger grade school students, First Communion for grades 3–4 (and others who have missed this). We will ask for parent input and implement times that days that seem to work for most of us.

MEET and GREET

Youth & Family

Meet & Greet with Pastor Calvin

All Middle school and High school youth with parents are invited to a meeting with Pastor Calvin on August 30th from 6:00 to 7:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. This is a chance for Pastor Calvin to get to know the youth (& their parents) in these grades and vice versa.

We will discuss ministry information for the upcoming year. *What programming do you want to see this year? What's important to youth and families?* Now is the time to begin the process. **Please join us.** We'll have a few games also.

Our Creator's Toolbox Includes



Randomness

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." Genesis 1:1-2

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I have been thinking about something Jonathan Rova talked about in his June 4th sermon. He mentioned how the Genesis creation story requires both God and humans. This is different from many creation stories requiring only the gods with humans as bystanders. And it is different than some modern creation stories in which God plays no part. Jonathan emphasized how in this creation story there is a purpose and that humans share in that purpose as stewards of God's creation. And Jonathan noted the liturgical nature of the story. We could hear the cadence of the story as Jess Markusen read it at that service. We could feel the rhythm of the creative power of God as the purpose of creation unfolded day by day in that story.



Reflecting on the earth as being "formless and empty" I have to wonder what brought light, vibrancy, and spice to it. I suggest that one of the tools our Creator uses is **randomness**. I suspect that most people think of randomness as sort of a bland soup of numbers that all stay close to an average with a little bit of variation evenly distributed around that center. What an odd notion that God would use randomness as a vehicle to add color and life to a formless and empty earth. However, as a former research physicist, I believe randomness has been misunderstood.

As a researcher, the simulations I wrote to model phenomena required a random number generator. I began to appreciate how difficult it is to create a truly random sequence of numbers. I also began to recognize how different true randomness looks compared to our preconceived expectations. I have found that when people look at a random sequence of numbers, they

would conclude that the sequence of numbers does not seem very random to them. That is because truly random number sequences have remarkable flurries of activity and temporary patterns that do not seem like coincidence to us.

I was talking to my daughter, Cecelia, about randomness and she told me how Apple created a truly random shuffle feature for your music lists. Users complained that it was not working because there were too many songs by the same artist or genre in a row. Apple had to change their shuffle from a truly random shuffle to a more evenly distributed variety of music in the way Apple users expected a random shuffle to behave. How many times have you in a card game accused someone of not properly shuffling the cards because of the patterns you see in the cards that were dealt? How can this be random? Why are games of chance so exciting? Because the results are so unpredictable and full of spice, flavor, and color.

We misunderstand what randomness is. There is nothing boring about randomness. What a great tool for God to wield while forming creation. Our Creator choosing to use randomness as one vehicle for creation does not result in a gray monotone world but in a vibrant, colorful world full of amazing patterns and what to us seem like improbable coincidence. It results in a creation with a purpose.

Your brother in Christ, Mike Chmelik (he/him/his)



"God's work. Our hands." Sunday is September 10th, 2023. This annual day of service is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - *one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor*. The Church in Society committee could use your help coming up with this year's service project. How might we love and serve our neighbors? If you have a service project idea to pass along, please send a note to Jess at jess.markusen@gmail.com

Mission Endowment Fund Scholarships Awarded

Mission Endowment Fund

Bethlehem Lutheran established a Mission Endowment Fund in 2001. Donation to the funds are sent to and managed by the ELCA Foundation in Chicago. The investment earnings from the fund are then used to support initiatives and programs in four designated categories:

1. Outreach to missions, programs and initiatives within our local community and Synod.
2. Outreach to missions, programs, and initiatives of the ELCA in the U.S. and the World.
3. Funding for Bethlehem capital improvements, debt reduction, and/or building programs.
4. Funding for other causes and programs that enhance the mission outreach of Bethlehem.

This spring the Mission Endowment Committee and Church Council decided to give \$2000 to Bethlehem's Youth budget to be used as seed money for summer "camperships" and/or other youth programming.



It was also decided to grant three \$1000 scholarships to CCHS 2023 graduates: **Rowan Lindholm, Katie Peck and J Shannon**. All three applicants have

been involved in congregational and community activities and submitted thoughtful and sincere statements regarding their faith journeys. They are very worthy of this support as they begin their post-secondary education. (I was able to use this and receive \$500 matching funds by Bethel.)

Donations to the Mission Endowment Fund are always welcome and are truly "gifts that keep on giving." Brochures outlining the fund in more detail are available in the church narthex.

Concordia Congregational Scholarship Award

Bethlehem Lutheran Church has recently become a part of the Concordia Congregational Scholarship Program, thanks to a Concordia College alumni and supporter who generously donated funds to the church for this purpose. The program provides an opportunity for a member of Bethlehem who attends Concordia College in

Moorhead, MN, to receive a \$1,000 scholarship from the church, which is then matched by the college in the amount of \$500. This scholarship is renewable up to four years per student.

Bethlehem is pleased to announce that **Rowan Lindholm**, who is attending Concordia for the 2023-24 academic year, has been awarded a \$1000 scholarship as well as the \$500 match. We are happy to support our youth who are interested in furthering their education at one of our fine ELCA colleges in this manner.

Bethlehem is very proud of these fine young adults and wishes them every success as they pursue their educational and career goals. In the award announcement letter to these students, Janet Simonen (on behalf of the Mission Endowment Committee) encouraged these exceptional students: "May your faith in Christ be with you as you embark on this journey."

Prayer Warriors

Bethlehem's Prayer Chain is available to provide comfort to members, families and friends who are going through a difficult time. The prayer chain



receives a request, which is simply asking the Prayer Warriors join in prayer, and pass the chain along. The idea is that the more people you have praying together, the more amplified the power of the prayer. The chain leader likes to speak with the person first for permission and makes sure they would want and appreciate our help. Specific requests generally include prayers for health and well-being, and some requests may be for prayers of hope through difficult life decisions or for a peaceful transition from this world. Requests may be kept in confidence within the chain members. If ok'd for public knowledge, these requests are generally added to BLC's Prayer Request List.

Our Prayer Warriors could use some extra people (links) on the chain to help in amplifying prayer requests. Phyllis Olson is our Prayer Chain Coordinator, with Laura Popkes being the next chain (link) member. Please contact either of these members to lend a prayerful hand or to make a prayer request. Phyllis Olson: 218-370-9233, pjolson@boreal.org. Laura Popkes: 218-388-0109, laura@birchlake.us.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>30</p>  <p>10:00am Worship Service 11:00am Service</p>	<p>31</p> 	<p>1</p> <p>Clarity Hearing Appts.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Overnight group- Westminster Presbyterian 8:00am Church In Society meeting 12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study 4:00pm Swing Band Practice 6:30pm Average Worship Band Practice</p> 	<p>3</p> <p>Overnight group- Westminster Presbyterian</p> <p>8:00am Bible Study</p> <p>9:00am Quilting</p> <p>7:00pm Executive Committee</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Overnight group- Westminster Presbyterian</p>	<p>5</p> <p>11:00am Janice Toffey's gravesite service at Poplar Grove Cemetery</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Swing Band Worship Service 8:40am Choir Practice 10:00am Worship with Live stream & Choir sings</p>  <p>Join us for VBS!</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p> <p>9:00am VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL</p> 	<p>9</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p> <p>9:00am VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study 5:30pm Soup Supper 6:30pm Contemporary Worship Service with Pastor Calvin Konop, Presiding</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p> <p>8:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 9:00am VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 7:00pm Council meeting</p> 	<p>11</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p> <p>10:00am Rebecca & Ruth Circles</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p>
<p>13</p> <p>10:00am Worship Service - Live streamed</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p> <p>6:00pm Worship Planning Committee</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p> <p>12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p> <p>8:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Clarity Hearing Appts.</p> <p>Denise's Vacation</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20</p> <p>Bluegrass Worship Service (??) 8:00am Choir Practice 10:00am Worship with Live stream & Choir sings</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Newsletter articles due for next edition</p>	<p>23</p> <p>12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study</p> 	<p>24</p> <p>8:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27</p> <p>Installation of Pastor Calvin Konop by Bishop Amy Odgren 10:00am Traditional Worship Service 11:15am Potluck meal on patio</p>  <p>Church Potluck Picnic</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p>12:30pm Mid-Day Mid-Week Bible Study 6-7:30 pm Youth & Family Meet & Greet with Pastor Calvin</p> 	<p>31</p> <p>8:00am Bible Study</p>  <p>JOIN A STUDY GROUP</p> <p>9:00am Quilting</p> 	<p>1</p> <p>Clarity Hearing Appts.</p>	<p>2</p> 

Denise will be out of the office from August 6—20th. You may reach Pastor Calvin during posted office hours. (see back cover)



Beware of scams! Pastor Calvin will never email, text or social media message asking for money, gift cards, or anything like that. It is a common scam. Alert us if this happens to you.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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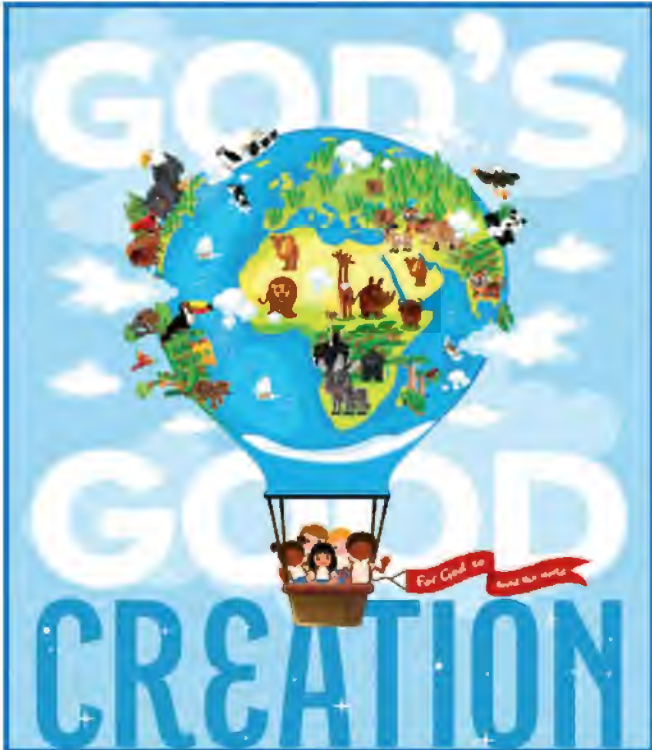
Belonging to Christ,

Sharing Christ on the

North Shore and beyond.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
AUGUST 8-9-10, 9AM-NOON
YOUTH GRADES 1ST-5TH



Register at www.sharingchrist.org/forms

PASTOR CALVIN'S CONTACT INFORMATION

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emergency,
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