



The Bethel Newsletter

December 2020

Porter, Minnesota

Sundays in December

Worship with us via the internet or in person



December 6



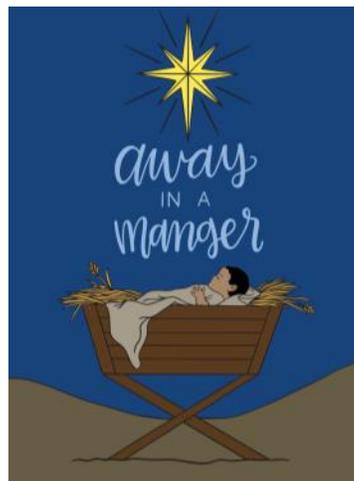
December 20



December 27

*"Here am I,
the servant
of the Lord;
let it be
with me
according to
your word."*
LUKE 1:38, NRSV

December 13



Christmas Eve

SUNDAY SCHOOL

REIMAGINED

IT'S "KID'S TIME"

ONLINE

ALL SUNDAY SCHOOL "KIDS" ARE CALLED TO WATCH "KID'S TIME" LIVE STREAMED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WORSHIP

"KIDS TIME" HAS CHRISTMAS MUSIC, STORIES AND PRAYERS WITH TERRY, AND

PASTOR ELLEN .

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES WILL BE E-MAILED WEEKLY OR AVAILABLE AT THE CHURCH.

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Bethel Lutheran Church is affiliated with the Southwest Synod of Minnesota of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

God's Work. Our Hands.

Bethel Lutheran Church
 P. O. Box 126
 2429 County Hwy 16
 Porter, MN 56280

Telephone: (507) 296-4658

Office Hours at the Church:
 Wednesday —9:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

E-mail address: bethel@bethelofporter.com

Website: bethelofporter.com

Pastor Rev. Ellen Munter 296-4558 (home)
 507-828-1000 (cell)
 Email: pastormunter@gmail.com

Your Church Officers

President	Mike Knutson	507-829-2767
Vice President	Randy Kamrath	507 530-4417
Treasurer	Deana Moeller	296-4634
Financial Sec.	Josh Sumption	296-4497
Secretary	Sue Alley	507-530-1628

Deacons

Linda Bruns	296-4645
Martha Melrose	296-4515
Craig Petersen	296-4483
Terry Dybsetter	296-4401
Sara Wollum	223-5844

Trustees

Jerome Bruns, Chair	296-4645
Tom Gawerecki	224-2267
Roger Longhenry	296-4422
Bob Merritt Jr	296-4436

Board of Education

Tracy Wente, Chair	296-4623
Pat Petersen	296-4483
Nikki Petersen	507-829-0555
Rachel Wollum	223-5844
Megan Syltie	507-829-9931

Custodian

Lou Knutson	296-4489
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December Birthdays

1st Kelly Anderson
 2nd Rebecca Kamrath
 5th Sandy Appelen, Eric Wollum,
 Ethan Petersen
 6th Pauline Anderson
 7th Glenda Ackerman, Colton Syltie
 9th Megan Sumption, Mason Tetrick
 11th John Stone
 15th Chad Blumeyer
 17th Cade Syltie
 19th Mark Syltie
 20th Lorraine Alleckson
 25th Jerry Pridal
 28th David Dybsetter, Hayden Noyes
 29th Randy Anderson, Donna Stone,
 Miranda DeBaere Bryan Emery
 30th Sara Wollum, Emma Stone

If you have any corrections or additions,
 please contact the church office at 296-4658, or
 email: bethel@bethelofporter.com If your name
 does not appear in the month of your birthday, it
 means we don't have your birth date. Thanks!



It's December and that can only mean one thing: 2020 is almost over!! It's become cliché to say that this has been a difficult year, that we are living through unprecedented times, or extraordinary times or whatever. However, things become clichés because they tend to be true. For many, many people, this has been a very difficult year. There have been things to celebrate, for sure – babies being born, couples getting married, anniversaries of all kinds being celebrated, students graduating. But there has also been a mist surrounding all these events that brings the joy down a couple notches.

We aren't able to celebrate the way that we would like, and that is frustrating and distressing.

Of course, December means other things, too. I don't know all that it means in each of your lives and families, but in the life and among the family of the Church, it means hearing again the promises of God. That's part of what Advent and Christmas are all about. Hearing once again the promises that God has made to each of us. The promise of hope. The promise of peace. The promise of a Savior. The promise of His presence with us. And this year especially, those are pretty important promises for us to hear.

In some ways, the situation the Israelites found themselves in at the time of Jesus' birth and ours now are not so very different. Everything they did, every celebration, every funeral, every joy, every sorrow were overshadowed at least a little by what was happening around them. They were not really a free nation. Rome had control, it's soldiers on the streets made that abundantly clear. Rome could dictate where they went – see Mary (9 months pregnant!) and Joseph on the road to Bethlehem. They weren't even safe from their own government – see Mary and Joseph and the infant fleeing as refugees into Egypt from Herod. It wasn't exactly the golden age.

It was into all of that upheaval and uncertainty that God sent His Son. Not waiting for the “perfect moment” but coming into the messiness and fear of the world as it was. Fulfilling the prophecy of Emmanuel, God with us. This is how God works – then and now. God never shies away from the chaos and suffering of our world, but deliberately enters into them. Because the prophecy of Emmanuel was not just for those people way back when, but for us here and now. It may not seem like it, with thousands of people dying each day and hospitals and medical staffs overwhelmed. But I promise you – God is present.

We may wish that God would just lift us up and out of this situation completely. But that is not how God operates. Throughout Scripture we find God coming to the people and seeing them through their difficulties, not magically fixing them. The fact that God sent Jesus to be born into the world exactly as it was – warts and all – is evidence of how much God loves us, and how serious God is about saving the whole creation.

I know that many of you will be having significantly smaller celebrations for Christmas this year. That you will be missing loved ones and beloved traditions. I will miss having the Council Christmas Party, and the Sunday School Christmas Program. I will really miss seeing all y'all on Christmas Eve at worship – though we will be open for worship if you feel comfortable attending. But in and through all of these disappointments and sorrows, God is with us. The promises of Christmas – peace, hope, love and Emmanuel – are not dependent on us and our situation. They are wholly dependent on God. And God is faithful. God keeps His promises.

So be in the lookout – God is absolutely present in and through this difficult, unprecedented, extraordinary time. “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel” (which means, God with us).” Matthew 1:23.

In Christ,

Pastor Munter

CHURCH COUNCIL



The Church Council and Board reports for November 2020

Trustees

Trustee action taken:

- Motion was made and second to pay bills.
- Furnace circulation pump at the church was replaced.
- The furnace at the parsonage was repaired and may need additional work done.
- The water heater at the parsonage is leaking. We will get it replaced.
- Thank you to Bill Ningen and Jim Moeller for removing the big tree branches in the church yard.

Bob, Roger and Jerome

Deacons

- Deacon for December: Craig Petersen
- Food Shelf: Ivanhoe
- Communion Dates for December 6,13 & Christmas Eve, December 24.

Board of Education

No report



For Your information :

As we continue with the changes within our parish community due to COVID 19 , we felt a need to add to our COVID plan. The following is an appendix to the document that the council passed earlier in the year. This portion addresses the use other Social Hall, Kitchen and Sunday School wing of Bethel Lutheran.

Appendix I to COVID plan for Bethel Lutheran Church, Porter, MN

Guidance regarding use of the social hall and kitchen area during the COVID mandate.

There will be no activities held in the social hall, kitchen or other rooms in the social hall wing of Bethel Lutheran other than church designated functions until COVID mandates are lifted.

Approved by the Bethel Council September 14, 2020



Blue Christmas Service

We will be having a Blue Christmas worship service again this year on **December 20th at 6:00 pm**. This is a time of readings, prayer and singing designed for those who find the Christmas season more melancholy than merry.

Our service will be live-streamed, but you are also welcome to attend in person.

The Thanksgiving Tree



Bethel's Thanksgiving Tree was a big success.
The gifts are piled up under the tree and will soon be delivered to Prairie V to brighten some child's Christmas.

Thank you to everyone who participated with this project.

Monthly Financial Update

Miscellaneous Revenues

The Revenues taken into account are all weekly and holiday offerings as well as special offerings designated to the general account such as Fuel, Missions, and Food Shelf Offerings. This comparison is only for Revenues and Expenses associated with Bethel's responsibility for our parish budget, meaning checks from Hemnes Lutheran Church are not included in the Year to Date Revenue and their 25% share of our

parish budget is not included in the Year to Date Budgeted Expenses. This comparison also does not take into account Refunds and Reimbursements or Savings Reimbursements. These sources of revenue are normally received to pay expenses that are not a part of Bethel's operating budget, so are not used to make comparison to our budgeted expenses.

The Year to Date difference will show on a monthly basis if we are receiving sufficient offerings to cover our budget, or if we are behind. The running total for each month will be in a Year to Date total, not a monthly total.

If it is necessary to borrow money from Savings Reserves to fund the operations of Bethel, the amount will be denoted in the Cash Reserves Expended column. If funds are repaid to the Savings Reserves during a surplus, the repayment will be denoted in the Cash Reserves Repaid column. Reserves Expended and Reserves Repaid are not represented in the Revenues and Expenses columns of this report.



	Year:	2020		
Total Budgeted Expenses:	\$	103,919.70	*Does not include the Hemnes share of the Parish Budget.	
Monthly revenue required to meet budget:	\$	8,659.98		

Year to Date Actual Revenue and Budgeted Expenses Comparison-

This report is based on budgeted expenses only, divided evenly for each month of the calendar year. Actual expenses per month varie greatly. This analysis is to be used as a guideline only and not a full representation of the full financial health of Bethel Lutheran Church.

This report does not include revenues assigned to the Hemnes Lutheran Church portion of the joint parish budget or transfers from savings accounts that cover special, non-budgeted expenses.

	Total Revenue for Month	Year to Date Revenue	Year to Date Budgeted Expense	Year to Date Difference: shortfalls shown as negative numbers	Cash Reserves Expended	Cash Reserves Repaid	Reserves Repaid Notes
January	\$7,965.95	\$7,965.95	\$8,659.98	-\$694.03			
February	\$4,163.24	\$12,129.19	\$17,319.95	-\$5,190.76			
March	\$8,867.00	\$20,996.19	\$25,979.93	-\$4,983.74			
April	\$8,572.27	\$29,568.46	\$34,639.90	-\$5,071.44			
May	\$16,334.85	\$45,904.12	\$43,299.88	\$2,604.25		\$3,000.00	Federal COVID Response Grant*
June	\$7,028.50	\$52,932.62	\$51,959.85	\$972.77			
July	\$3,832.84	\$56,765.46	\$60,619.83	-\$3,854.37			
August	\$6,590.74	\$63,356.20	\$69,279.80	-\$5,923.60			
September	\$3,552.25	\$66,908.45	\$77,939.78	-\$11,031.33			
October	\$4,830.00	\$71,738.45	\$86,599.75	-\$14,861.30	-\$3,000.00		
November	\$7,396.20	\$79,134.65	\$95,259.73	-\$16,125.08		-\$3,018.00	Federal COVID Response Grant*

Bethel Workgroup Schedule

Altar Workers for Sundays in December

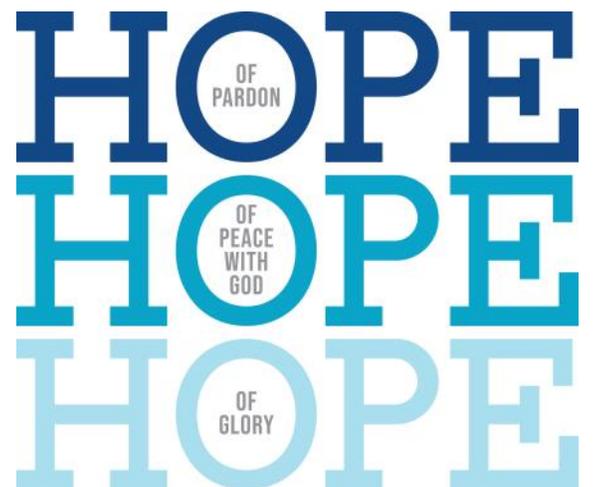
Carmon Mamer
Charlotte Wilke

GROUP #1

Brenda and Mike Knutson	507-829-2767
Paul and Darcy Bruns	507-530-0327 and 507-530-5036
Rose and Dick Anderson	296-4440
Marilyn and Waldo Petersen	223-5829
Sue Alley	507-530-1628
Marty and Meghan Syltie	507 829-9931, 507 829-9924
Linda and Jerome Bruns	296-4645
Bill Ningen	296-4693
Josh Sumption	296-4497
Tiffany Keating	223-5542
Brian and Cassidy Emery	605-880-3569
Matt & Victoria Bliss	605-941-4062 and 320-287-1050



**Please note: The first person or couple on the list are chair for the next funeral.*



Call someone, they may feel blue also. And consider attending our **Blue Christmas Service** on **Dec. 20 at 6:00 pm** in person or online.

Worship Schedule

Our worship will be live streamed on our Facebook page. Bulletins are e-mailed weekly or available for pickup in the narthex.

www.facebook.com/bethelofporter

Other resources are available on our website. www.bethelofporter.com



Coming Events

Worship has resumed with adaptations to provide a safe worship experience for all—masks required.

Our worship service is still available live streamed, video or audio recording. Please worship with us as you are able.

**Worship with communion will be held on December 6, 13, & 24
Confirmation on Wednesdays from
6:30—7:45 pm**

Please stay safe, wash your hands, wear a mask, social distance and pray for those in our country and around the world who are sick and who are grieving.

Readings for the month of December

December 6 Advent 2	December 13 Advent 3	December 20 Advent 4	December 24 Christmas Eve	December 27 Christmas 1
Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-13 2 Peter 3:8-15 Mark 1:1-8	Isaiah 61:1-11 Psalm 126 1 Thess. 5:16-24 John 1:6-28	2 Samuel 7:1-16 Psalm 89:1-26 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38	Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14	Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 148 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40

LET IT SNOW!

Create a winter wonderland with this fun craft.



What you need:

- Glass jar with lid but no label
- Laminated photo (that will fit in the jar)
- Small plastic Christmas trinkets
- Hot or waterproof glue
- Container with spout
- 1 cup distilled water
- 3 tsp. glycerin
- Glitter



What you do:

1. Unscrew lid and flip jar upside down. Glue the photo and trinkets to the inside of the lid, standing upright.
2. In a container, mix water and glycerin. Pour the mixture into the jar, leaving space at the top.
3. Spoon in some glitter.
4. When glue is dry, attach the decorated lid tightly. Shake the jar to see "snow" swirl and settle.

Kids Page



WHITE AS SNOW

Jesus, our Savior, came to earth to purify sinners.

Directions: Figure out which path through the puzzle is correct. Choose one to try, starting at the first picture under the "Path" box. Follow each picture's directional cues to see if the words make sense when placed in order in the blanks below. If not, try a different path until you figure out the Bible verse.

MOVE →	MOVE ↑	MOVE ←	MOVE ↓		
PATH 1	PATH 2	PATH 3	PATH 4	PATH 5	PATH 6
for	give	come	together	around	after
self	into	settle	eternal	thanks	forgive
God	LORD	says	without	Christ	warmth
love	sins	scarlet	other	light	praise
red	star	white	snow	winter	peace

EXIT ↓

"_____ now, let us _____ the matter," _____ the
 _____. "Though your _____ are like _____,
 they shall be as _____ as _____"

ISAIAH 1:18, NIV

Answer: Path 3; come, settle, says, LORD, sins, scarlet, white, snow



THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

P.O Box 126

2429 Co. Hwy. 16

Porter, MN 56280

Bethel Lutheran Newsletter

December 2020

Bethel Worship, Sunday 10:00 am

"KIDS TIME" following

*Live streamed on the Facebook page
and later at bethel@bethelofporter.com*

www.facebook.com/bethelofporter

