



# Bethlehem Star

January 2017

## Happy New Year!

The New Year has come and we have once again so many reasons to rejoice and be glad. It is still the Christmas Season through January 5<sup>th</sup>. Then on we go into the bright Season of Epiphany. Maybe it won't seem so bright right away, but by the time we turn to Lent on March 1<sup>st</sup> it will be getting a whole lot brighter as the days lengthen. Throughout January and all of February the Epiphany season will stretch for eight Sundays. Our worship themes will draw us to the images of Christ in Scripture, the light, the servant, the foundation, the beloved Son, the lamb. We also will hear about our identity in baptism, we will be challenged to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God, and Jesus will bless us with the timeless Beatitudes. Though Epiphany is a 'low' season, or an 'ordinary season' in comparison to the high festival seasons of Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter, obviously Epiphany is not without its riches in spiritual sustenance.

One of the enduring themes of Epiphany is light. I look at Bethlehem Lutheran Church as one of those main beacons of God's light in the community of Grand Marais. We are after all the embodied spirit of the Risen Christ. We need to let our little light shine. Below are ten reasons to support Bethlehem Lutheran Church in 2017 as we "let our light shine!"

1. God asks us to give. Our stewardship is a matter of great importance in Jesus' teaching.
2. For our own sake, each of us needs to give, as an expression of love and gratitude.
3. We are accountable to Christ's mission, including its funding.
4. As we look to the future, our congregation recognizes the need to sustain its core ministries. To do this requires increased offering support.
5. Our gifts help fund a renewed priority on ministry to, with and by children, youth and their families. Passing on the faith to the next generation requires a vibrant partnership between home and church. In 2017, we hope for a new position to lead us into this future.
6. Bethlehem Lutherans want to continue our strong history of outreach ministry. Our gifts help fund incredible local, regional and international ministries of evangelism, hunger and disaster relief, and community partnerships.
7. Our gifts help fund necessary efforts in hospitality, relationships and the life-changing experience of Christian community.
8. Worship is a central practice of Christ's church and a traditional strength of this congregation. Offerings fund this faith-forming work that centers our community of faith.
9. Generosity is the lifestyle of Christians – in relationships, time, talent and treasure.

The church is about people and our life together in Christ Jesus. Our offerings empower the leadership of pastor and staff as well as strengthen our effort to grow in the talents God has given each of us. Nothing strengthens faith and brings more lasting joy than knowing God is using you for His good purposes.

Thank you for all you do and all you mean to Bethlehem Lutheran Church! You keep the light shining through your weekly and monthly offerings! We cannot accomplish what we'd like without your generous support.

*Pastor Mark*

## New Lights in the Sanctuary

We have the new lights for the sanctuary. We began replacing the blinking ones and will have all 50 replaced soon. Our old LED bulbs were under factory recall.

The inconvenience of this process will be offset at least by knowing that the newer LED bulbs will use lower wattage and provide higher lumens. Thank you for your patience.

## New Directory

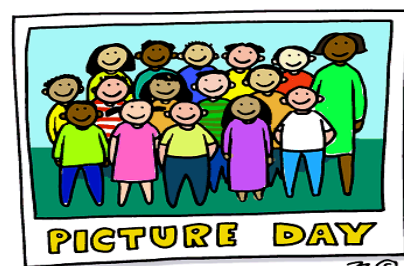
I have invited Lifetouch to return for a 2017 Church Directory. We have over 26 new households with us since 2011, and we have many new children. Laura will coordinate phone contact with all

members, and assist in the scheduling. The dates be Wednesday to Saturday, May 17 – 20, 2017.

## THANK YOU

**So many thanks for this past Advent/Christmas season!!!** For the **Hanging of the Greens:** Janet Simonen, Hilja Iverson, John and Cindy Muus, Janet Ringquist, Jim and Rebecca Wiinanen, Kim Shepard, Chet Lindskog, Aaron and Lindsay Mielke; for the **Sanctuary Christmas Tree:** Kent and Lyndsay Anderson, Gunnar Anderson, Kendra Berglund and Adriana Berglund. For the **Julefest:** Laurie Spry and Cindy Muus with so many of the BLCW, Ethel, Martha, Millie, Carol, Eleanor, Janet, Theresa, Phyllis, Leah,

Lynn, Barb, Joan, Jody, Sally, Kris, Philis, Stacey, Shelby, Isabel, Cecelia, Amy, Teresa, for the **Christmas Pageant,** Theresa, Shelby, Joni, Janet, Janet, Kim, Carrie, Laurie, Hilja, Brooke, Savannah, Molly, for **Lessons and Carols:** Paul Muus, Karina Roth, Philis Anderson, and Bonnie, Mike, Barb, Jim, Janet, John, Cindy, Craig, Dianne, Susan, Mike, Annie, Shelby, Stephanie, Thomas, John, Susan, George, Marilyn, Kathy, Mark, Laura, Joey, Will, Louise, David, Emma, Tristen, Hilja, Kris, for



**Luminaria:** Jim and Jody Daugherty; for **Candelabra:** Joni, Nathan, Greg, Debra, Jim, Kent, Laura, Mark, for **Plowing and shoveling:** Chet and Butch, also to many **Salvation Bell Ringers,** to the many members who set up for the **Borealis concert,** served at the receptions, and cleaned up afterwards, way too many to name. Thank you, thank you, thank you kindly!

## Bible Studies at Bethlehem:

**Circle Bible Study Leaders:** Pastor Mark will meet with the Bible study leaders of the Circles to go over the monthly Bible study in the Gather magazine. These are high quality studies and well worth

Our diligence in working through them together for insights to share with each group. This study hour will be held at 1:00 p.m. on the last Thursday of the month.

Our first meeting will be January 26 at 1:00 p.m. as Circles prepare for February meetings.



## Mission of the Month - MaaSAE Girls Lutheran School

The MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School in Monduli Tanzania is our mission of the month in January. This school started just over 50 years ago by missionary  
Rev.

J. David Simonson and has been a special mission in educating the MaaSAE girls of Tanzania.

As always you may use the special envelopes in the pews or write **MGLSS** on the memo line of your check.

### Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 29, 2017

The Annual meeting is our congregational event to recognize what we have done in Jesus name in 2016 and look forward into building the faith community in 2017 and beyond. The 2016 church council has prepared a balanced and conservative budget for 2017.

we wish to accomplish, elect new representatives, and consider a new initiative for youth and family ministry. The meeting will be held immediately after the worship service on January 29 with a pancake brunch served by Youth and Family Ministries to fund winter faith building retreats and activities.

Along with seeking your approval with the vote for the budget we will review capital improvements

### Still NEW: Text Messages from God

Join Pastor Mark at Java Moose for a lunch or coffee break to read and consider the Bible lessons appointed for the next Wednesday and Sunday worship. We will meet at 12 noon each Monday. We will plan on one hour. If you have to leave early, that is understood.

### Matthew - Gospel of the Year

In January 2017 we will take a five week tour through the Gospel of Matthew. Commentators have perceived an ordering of the Jesus story according to Matthew in a five book se-

quence. On the **five Tuesdays of January at 7:00 p.m.** we will follow that pattern and make our way through Matthew.

As this the Gospel readings for this year primarily are from Matthew, this study will help hold the worship texts in larger context.

**All Youth Fundraiser:**  
**January 29** the youth will provide a pancake brunch for the annual meeting. This meal will help fund our winter retreats and faith learning. We need many families helping and of course all confirmation kids get service points for this.

**Youth Winter Retreat to Wilderness Canoe Base February 10-12**  
Three Parent/Adult Chaperones are needed to make this happen and to make it a success. We will need one extra male adult and two female adults as our chaperones for the retreat to Wilderness Canoe Base. This retreat is being planned for a cold time so that we can play broomball on the lake and enjoy the deep winter. Last year in March it was way too slushy. Come for Movie, Bible Trivia, Campfire and S'Mores.



## Go Green

Can Bethlehem do better as an ecological steward? Yes, we can. We have already replaced single pane windows with high energy glass, on the south wall. Now we have more windows to replace and continue saving energy and money. We have replaced our old low performance boiler with higher efficiency electric boiler

We have insulated the sanctuary roof, and increased the insulation above the narthex, and insulated the Sacristy for the first time. We plan to add insulation to the fellowship hall roof. We have sealed large gaps in the siding and around windows, and around the stain glass cross. We are moving away from Styrofoam. We recycle. What more can we do?

How about composting? How about solar power? We have been given a designated donation as an inspiration to think more in the direction of adding either solar thermal or solar photovoltaic power. This year we will call together a Green Team to explore more possibilities on **Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

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Along with seeking your approval with the vote for the budget we will review capital improvements we wish to accomplish, elect new representatives, and consider a new initiative for youth and family ministry.

The meeting will be held immediately after the worship service on January 29 with a pancake brunch served by Youth and Family Ministries to fund winter faith building retreats and activities.

## Youth and Family Meetings

It is time to begin organizing for a fabulous year in Youth and Family Ministry. We have recognized that we need to initiate some careful planning and therefore

will set multiple meetings of all the members who are involved in our many areas for youth.

## Celebration of Baptism

January 8 is the Sunday we celebrate the Baptism of our Lord. We have chosen for a number of years to set aside time on this Sunday to recognize our littlest members who have been baptized in the past three years. It our time to lift up the glorious themes of belonging and salvation we receive in baptism and to re-affirm our prayer support of each of the parents and

sponsors of these children on our Cradle Roll. For all the families with infants through age three we send out a monthly newsletter called "Splash!" which as special readings and prayers to help our young parents raise their little loved ones in faith in Christ.

**Homestead:** We will continue to meet each Monday at 2:00 p.m. in the sun room. All members of Bethlehem living at Homestead are indeed warmly welcome to join us for an excursion deep into the lessons for the next Sunday worship. Join us for a warm discussion and prayer.



## Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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*Belonging to Christ, Sharing Christ on  
the North Shore and beyond.*



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- **Sunday School and Wednesday after School, and VBS meeting:** Pastor Mark invites all members involved in our ministries with Elementary age kids and younger to meeting on **Monday, January 9 at 5:00 p.m.**

- **Confirmation, Middle School and Senior High Ministries meeting:** Pastor Mark invites all members volunteering with ministries for our middle and sr. high ministries to a meeting on **Thursday January 19 at 5:00 p.m.**

**Youth and Family Ministry Committee: January 23<sup>rd</sup>** Mike Prom will convene a meeting of the steering committee for all youth ministries at 5:00 p.m.

**All Youth Fundraiser: January 29** the youth will provide a pancake brunch for the annual meeting. This meal will help fund our winter retreats and faith learning. We need many families helping and of course all confirmation kids get service points for this.

**Senior High Cardia Deo** This is the synod wide senior high youth event held at Big Sandy Bible Camp by McGregor, MN March 3-5, 2017 Senior High from all 145 congregation of our synod gather for music, fun, worship, Bible, and more fun. We need to register by January 29! The cost will be \$60.00 with a generous scholarship from Youth and Family Ministries.

**More Senior High News:** By September 18, 2017 we will be submitting our complete registration to attend the 2018 National ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston TX. Start planning!