



BETHLEHEM  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

# BETHLEHEM NEWS

## FEBRUARY 2024

401 West Main Street  
West Dundee, IL 60118

### BETHLEHEM'S MISSION...

"To share the Living Water of Jesus Christ with all who thirst."

### WORSHIP

3:30 p.m. Saturday - Traditional

*(Please note the new Saturday time through March)*

8:00 a.m. Sunday - Traditional

10:30 a.m. Sunday - Contemporary at BCMC

**HOLY COMMUNION** - 1st, 3rd, & 5th Sundays

**FELLOWSHIP TIME** - 9:10 a.m.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** - 9:15 a.m.

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY** - 9:30 a.m.

**VACANCY PASTOR** - Reverend Bob Pudell

Pastor's cell: 847-340-5888

Pastor's email: [pastorbob@bethlehemchurchdundee.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:pastorbob@bethlehemchurchdundee.onmicrosoft.com)

**WEBSITE** - [BethlehemDundee.org](http://BethlehemDundee.org)

**E-MAIL** - [BethChurchDun@aol.com](mailto:BethChurchDun@aol.com)

## FIRST DAY OF LENT ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

With Holy Communion

February 14, 2024 - 11:00 am & 7:00 pm

Please join us during Lent for worship services every Wednesday at 11:00 am.

Please note that Wednesday Bible Study will start earlier at 9:30 am during Lent.

### ♥OUTREACH

Looking for people with a heart for sharing Jesus and reaching others

"82% of the unchurched are at least somewhat likely to attend church if invited," said Dr. Thom Rainer in his book "The Unchurched Next Door."

Outreach is the lifeblood of the church. No church can survive for very long if it is not reaching new people with the Good News of Jesus and inviting them to worship. Going and making disciples is the Lord's mandate for His church. We are looking for people who have ideas for Bethlehem to better reach the community around us. Part of that is identifying what has been done in the past and what worked and what didn't (and why). And identifying new ideas for us to try going forward. This group would mostly meet virtually (by phone and by email) and occasionally meet in person. If you are excited about what we can do together with Jesus to reach others, please contact Pastor Bob.

## **Valentine's Day + Ash Wednesday = February**

(and a focus on the gift of love with sacrifice)

According to Wikipedia: "Numerous early Christian martyrs were named Valentine. The Valentines honored on February 14 are Valentine of Rome (Valentinus presb. m. Romae) and Valentine of Terni (Valentinus ep. Interamnensis m. Romae). Valentine of Rome was a priest in Rome who was martyred in 269 and was buried on the Via Flaminia on February 14. The relics of St. Valentine were kept in the church and catacombs of San Valentino in Rome, which "remained an important pilgrim site throughout the Middle Ages."

Similarly, Ash Wednesday is a holy day of prayer, fasting and repentance and falls on the first day of Lent, the six weeks of penitence before Easter. The date always falls 46 days before Easter Sunday and is chiefly observed by Catholics and Christians. The Lenten period is one of reflection and repentance of sin, with those who observe it expected to seek reconciliation with God. Many choose to give up an indulgence, or fast during Lent as a representation of the Temptation of Christ as he fasted for 40 days and nights in the Judean Desert.

Ash Wednesday gets its name from early traditions in the Christian Church when penitents and sinners would partake in a period of public penance. They were sprinkled with ashes and dressed in a sackcloth until they were reconciled with church-goers on Maundy Thursday.

This practice had faded by the 10th Century, whereby Lent was marked by placing ashes in the shape of a cross on observers' foreheads. The ashes traditionally come from burning palms used on Palm Sunday.

This year is a little unusual as both of the above days are on the same date.

In both Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday we find a love that is sacrificial and reminds us that true love involves sacrifice and, in both cases, the ultimate sacrifice in the giving of their lives.

As we are about to enter the season of Lent that begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with Easter, we reflect on the love and sacrifice of our Savior, Jesus Christ. As Lent is a time of reflection on our relationship with God, repentance of our sinning, and renewal in our commitment to our faith in Jesus, may God richly bless us as we draw nearer to Him through our readings, through our prayers, and through our worship!

In His grace,  
Pastor Bob

### **VERSE OF THE MONTH FOR FEBRUARY:**

"Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes."  
(Daniel 9:3)

## **Church Council Update**

(By: Matthew Schmidt - Council Chairman)

During our January meeting, the council got an update from the Trustees on the extent and remediation efforts of the water damage in the education wing of the church. A huge thanks to Scott Heifetz on working with the remediation company and insurance company, and Martha Lehman working on trying to preserve the historical documents that were damaged.

The council also discussed the feedback from the December's voters' meeting about having a more constant church update communication. A schedule has been created so that each Board can give an update.

### **Church Council Board Update Schedule**

February: Treasurer (see following)

March: Trustees

May: Financial Secretary

July: Deacons

September: Treasurer

November: Financial Secretary

April: Elders

June: Education

August: Trustees

October: Education

December: Elders

## **CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE**

(By: Mike Albach – Treasurer)

The January Council meeting was held January 18, 2024, at which I presented the year end Treasurer's report. Some of the more notable items that I pointed out included:

Bethlehem's general fund expenses exceeded general fund income by a little over \$51,000 for the year. This income includes revenue from donations, interest on money market funds and CDs, and rental income from BCMC. It does not

include market fluctuations on investments. Expenses include operating expenditures for both BLC and BCMC operations and depreciation. Depreciation, stemming from the purchase of the BCMC building and early major improvements, totaled about \$40,000 for the year. Accordingly, cash expended exceeded cash received by roughly \$10,000. We were blessed by some large donations in December which narrowed this gap.

Also of note was the closing of Cherished Place, leaving our final 3 months without the related \$5,500 monthly revenue.

Designated fund expenses exceeded designated fund income by about \$38,000. This was due in large part to the BCMC beautification expenditures paid in 2024, while most of the related donations were received in 2022.

An analysis of revenue as compared to prior years, not including several large generous one-time donations, shows a downward trend which mirrors our attendance.

At year end, Bethlehem had \$61,000 of operating cash, and \$136,000 in money markets and CDs. Investments in Transamerica had a market value of \$278,000, and investments in Thrivent Mutual Funds had a market value of \$245,000. The Thrivent funds are designated whereas the majority of the rest is not. These investments enjoyed a market value increase of \$67,000 in 2023.

Actual operating expenditures beat the budget by a total of \$61,000.

In closing, considering the loss of revenue from Cherished Place and the downward trend in donations, any increase in member giving is appreciated.

## 2023 Financial Summary:

General Funds: Shortfall (\$51,000)  
Designated Funds: Shortfall (\$38,000)  
Cash on Hand: \$61,000  
Investments: \$523,000  
Investment Market Increase in 2023: \$67,000  
Overall Spending versus approved 2023 Budget: \$61,000  
Under Approved Budget

## OFFERINGS FOR JANUARY

1-7 General - \$2,149.19 Other - \$225.00  
1-14 General - \$2,006.19 Other - \$178.57  
1-21 General - \$2,774.69 Other - \$1,170.00  
1-28 General - \$4,873.19 Other - \$326.60

## FEBRUARY MISSION OF THE MONTH - NISRA

NISRA'S mission is to "enrich the lives of people with disabilities through meaningful recreation experiences."

It is an extension of 13 park districts and municipal recreation departments in the area, providing year-round opportunities for children, teens, and adults. Our local Dundee Township Park District is one of the 13 units.

Since 1976, NISRA has provided year-round recreation activities for local children, teens and adults with disabilities. NISRA offered some new programs such as Buddy Baseball, Special Olympics Floor Hockey, Learn to Rock Climb, Splash Pad and Playground Tour. They saw an overall increase in new participants and registrations for special events, social clubs, and Special Olympics. Please consider donating to this worthy program through your envelope donations.

~ H.I.S. "Hearts in Service" Ministry/Missions

## † CALLED HOME

Karl Edward Schroeder  
April 22, 1942–January 10, 2024  
Laid to Rest January 20, 2024

## ♥ HAPPY ANNIVERSARY ♥

Ernie and Jane Ebner wed on February 15, 2016  
Don and Alice Pate, Sr. wed on February 2, 1960

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY - FEBRUARY 🎂

1 - Sammy Tang  
3 - Deanna Guth  
7 - Sharon Daley  
7 - Bob Smith  
10 - Martha Lehman  
11 - Chase Denk  
11 - Michelle Kesler  
14 - Jason Lawson  
16 - Juliana Appel  
19 - Ernie Ebner  
19 - Avery Stennett  
19 - Taylor Stennett  
20 - Katia Wilbrandt  
22 - Lynn Petersen  
23 - Danielle Post  
24 - Shawn Bauer  
24 - Larry Wilbrandt  
28 - Jim Dawson

## 😊 WOMEN'S FRIENDSHIP GROUP

All are welcome! Mondays at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

The Sunday School children did a fantastic job performing at the Christmas Winter Concert on December 17. Thank you to our Choir for singing with the children during their performance of Go Tell It On the Mountain as well as to Mike Albach and John Sabella for strumming their guitars while the children sang Away in a Manger. The Sunday School children are truly blessed to have such a supportive congregation.

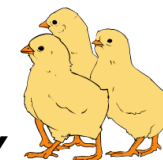


In February, we will be collecting toothbrush holders and boxes of bandaids in all sizes for our Operation Christmas Child. Please place your donations under the table across from the church office or give them to Debbie Smith.

## **ALUMINUM CANS**

Did you know that Bethlehem has been collecting aluminum cans for many years to support our youth fund? Recently the collection of 14 garbage bags of flattened cans earned us \$39.20, and the pull tabs on those cans were removed and donated to the Elks Club to help fund a project they are sponsoring. This may not sound like a large amount of money for all of the efforts involved, but the best part of collecting these cans is that it keeps them out of the landfills! We would love to receive your aluminum can donations! Please leave your empty aluminum cans in the garbage bin located at the west door (parking lot) entry near the fire escape. A huge thank you goes to Bethlehem member Paul Schif for collecting, flattening and delivering these cans to Elgin Recycling. He has been doing this work for our Youth for many years, and I very much appreciate his service. Thank you very much Paul.

Board of Education, Karen Lawson



## **LUTHERAN CHICKS BIBLE STUDY**

A Bible study for women meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month (February 13 and 27). The group meets in the library from 1 p.m.-2 p.m.

## **PILATES** “Let’s Get Moving”

Classes are offered every Friday at 9 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. (Please arrive 15 minutes early.) Everyone is welcome! We’ll be meeting on February 2, 9, 16, and 23; also March 1, 8, 15, and 22. Will not meet on Good Friday, March 29.

Experience the fun of exercise and good health!  
Questions? Linda Bryant 630-338-6515