

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 2019 BEACON

Merry Christmas! It's an English greeting which sort of means, "Hope you have a good time!"

Joyeux Noel – that's French, it literally means "Happy birthday!" So does the Spanish FELIZ Navidad!

Fröhliche Weinachten – from the German; means Joyous Holy Night!

So, what is this festival around which the last half of November and the entire month of December revolve?

There is no question that there is a change in attitude and a lightness of Spirit that begins to grow from the end of October to the beginning of January every year. The ingathering of family and friends for Thanksgiving Dinner and football, followed by Black Friday shopping, followed by Christmas decorations, followed by shopping, cookies, caroling, parties, and end of the year bonuses is etched into our culture. It helps us deal with the shorter days and colder weather. By the time we get through New Year's Day, the days are getting noticeably longer, and Spring seems visible on the distant horizon.

All human culture has tried to invent festivals and fun to get us through this time of extended darkness! However, in the merriment of our celebration, there is a powerful and serious event that often gets lost in the shuffle. It is celebrated on January 6 although astronomy shows that it happened on December 25. For it was at this darkest time of the year that stargazing MAGI from the East, the vast Parthian Empire, which stretched from Eastern Syria to the borders of China and India, arrived in Jerusalem asking, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?"

The MAGI are a bit of a mystery to us, but their arrival and their question indicate that the world at large was looking for a savior, a King of Kings! Someone who can bring sense and purpose to the chaos and cacophony of the frantic secular world in which we live. THEY ARE STILL LOOKING FOR THAT SAVIOR TODAY! The answer is staring them in the face but they refuse to see it!

The Greatest Mystery of the Ages! God becoming a human through a miraculous pregnancy and a normal physical birth. A full and complete identification of the Creator of the universe with the creatures who were the pinnacle of His creation! And why would God want to do this? Because it is the only way to free them from the curse of sin and the power of death!!!

Every year, our secular world tries to obscure these incredible events, which Matthew and Luke have recorded, by burying them in the glitz and silencing any reference to their connection to all the festivities.

And that's ok with me! Let them try!

King Herod couldn't do it! Caesar couldn't do it! It is 2,000 years later and the Light still shines in the Darkness and the Darkness cannot overcome it!!

For as long as you and I meet to worship, to study the story, to teach it to our children, and refuse to be quiet, the truth is passed on!!!

So, Have a Good Time! And remember Jesus!

Pastor Kent

November 10, 2019 Church Council Minutes

(to be reviewed at the December Council meeting)

Present: Allen Redman, Darla Drewelow, Carol Chapman, JoAnne Schwarz, Jeff Jacobson, Sherry Brouwer, Dale Krohn, Michelle Rients

Call to order by President Allen Redman "In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Devotions: None

Approval of the Agenda: Motion made, second, & approved as is.

Approval of the October Minutes: Motion made, second, & approved.

Approval of the Treasurer Report: Motion made, second, & approved.

Pastors Report: Pastor Wallace advised the move is going well & they've made another trip to the "farm" to bring more items here. They are getting acquainted with more and more people each day.

Ministry Team Reports:

1. Children & Youth – Pastor indicates Rebecca is anxious to get going with Sunday School. Her scheduled surgery will delay her plans.
2. Outreach & Fellowship – Darla reports there wasn't a meeting; however, a big thank you to the Ellermans who have volunteered to put up the Christmas Trees. There is also a need for new tree lights & tree storage boxes.
3. Property Committee – Dale reports the roof is done & the bill was less than expected. The same crew as last year will do Snow Removal. The Church kitchen back door has been installed but still needs adjusting. The Parsonage front door has arrived but installation date has not been determined.
4. Worship & Music Ministry Team – Pastor has been working with Jenny Hansmann on upcoming bulletins for the Holiday services & he will be determining the hymn selections.
5. Social Concerns - Socktober was successful. We delivered 214 pairs of socks to the Parkersburg Closet housed at the Library. For Thanksgiving & Christmas, several families are available for the "Adopt a Family" campaign. More information will be announced in the upcoming weeks.
6. Mission/Benevolence Ministry Team – No meeting. The next quarterly Benevolence distribution will be determined in the upcoming weeks.

Correspondence/Bill Approval: Thank you letters from Gavin & Devin Bernard, in appreciation for being able to attend Bible Camp, were distributed.

Old Business:

1. Nominating Committee: Allen will contact those members.

New Business:

1. Annual Meeting: Motion, second & passed to have the Annual Meeting on January 26 with a snow date on February 2, 2020.
2. Pastor Contract & Installation: Discussed various dates, guests, speakers, etc. Probably looking at late January or February. Will discuss at our next meeting.
3. Approval of proposed Budget: Tabled until next meeting. Council advised to review the hand out & be ready to discuss.
4. Ministerial Annual Reports: They are due to Jenny Hansmann by December 20. Please remind your applicable Chairpersons of the deadline date.
5. Christmas Services & Gift Sacks: Motion, second & passed to have Christmas Eve Services @ 7pm with Continuous Communion being offered. Discussed using real bread for Communion & real candles @ the Candlelight Service. Motion, second & passed to fill the Gift Sacks with the items Carol purchased & to contact Brothers Market for the purchase of the fruit & candy. Council will put the gift sacks together after Church Services on December 22, 2019. Motion to adjourn, second & passed.

Closing Prayers/The Lord's Prayer

Submitted by Carol Chapman, Recording Secretary

BLCW News

The BLCW will have our Cookie/Candy by the Pound sale on December 8th. Anyone can donate! Have your donations to the church on Saturday or Sunday. Sales will be after church with no early sales. If you are willing to share your recipe, please bring it with your donation. Thank you.

Church Council

The Nominating Committee is looking for individuals that are interested in serving on the Church Council. Please prayerfully consider this opportunity to serve. If interested, please call Bruce Simon (346-2150), Stacy Palmer (346-2774), Jenny Hansmann (269-2578), Dan Frey (231-3649), or Diane Buss (415-1583). Thank you.

Social Concerns

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Adopt-A-Family for Thanksgiving! All three families are so grateful for the wonderful food we provided them! We will also be adopting three families for Christmas this year. If you would like to contribute, please have all Christmas gifts wrapped and to the church by Sunday December 15th. Thank you in advance, I know this year's Adopt-A-Family for Christmas will be a success!

Annual Meeting Reports

December 20th is the due date for submitting reports that will be part of our 2019 Annual Report. Council Liaisons, please work with your team/committee to prepare and submit a report by that date.

Organized Prayer for Bethel Families

Week of December 1 – Dan & Kay Frey, Courtney & Tiffany; Mary Fink; Ben Frieling; Dennis & Bonnie Gerloff, Guy Gerloff

Week of December 8 – George Miller; Justin & Tessa (Gerloff) Matherly & family; Darwin & Peggy Miller; Dennis Muller & Ian; Amber (Muller) Cordes; Samantha (Muller) Wiegmann & family

Week of December 15 – Eric & Becky Simmons & Riley; Carol Warneka; Arlo Williams, Sandra Briggs

Week of December 22 – Henry & Janice Gerloff; Randy & Janelle Gorter, Josh & Ted; Kirk & Suzanne (Gerloff) Neuroth, Connor, Melea & Nick; Mike & Penney Neisen

Week of December 29 – Ken & Ranae Knock, Kelsie; Klint Knock, Morgan; Jeff & Stacy Palmer, Clayton & Evan; B.J. Gorter

Quilting

Since September, when we started quilting, we completed 55 quilts and the following received 39 quilts:

Friends of the Library
Maple Manor Village, Aplington
Relay for Life
Social Concerns
Bethel Church Family

December Birthdays

2 – Riley Ellermann
6 – Ranae Knock
7 – Dan Frey
15 – Jennifer Buss, Kay Frey
20 – Sarah Redman
22 – Colton Henrichs, Diane Johnson
24 – Nina Sweeney
26 – Savannah Buss
28 – Sara Mann
31 – Vada Luhring

Worship Assistant Schedule for December--Worship Service 9:00 am

	December 1	December 8	December 15	December 22	Christmas Eve	December 29
USHERS	Dennis & Bonnie Gerloff	Lee & Michelle Rients	Dan & Kay Frey	Dennis & Bonnie Gerloff	Dennis & Bonnie Gerloff	Larry & Carol Chapman
ORGANISTS/PIANISTS	Janet Mennen/Sharleen Hubbard					
ALTAR GUILD	JoAnne Schwarz					
GREETERS	Steve & Sherry Brouwer	Dennis & Karol Ellermann	Leah Knock	Jim & Eileen Lupkes		Greg Carolus
LECTORS	Lee Rients	Beth Van Lengen	Jeff Jacobson	Steve Brouwer		Carol Chapman
LITURGISTS	Michelle Rients		Dale Krohn	JoAnne Schwarz		Hymn Sing
ACOLYTES	Ava Mann	Gavin Bernard	Eliza Buss	Evan Palmer	Ava Mann Corryn Mann	Eliza Buss
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	Sherry Brouwer/ Allen Redman		Sherry Brouwer/ Allen Redman		Sherry Brouwer/ Allen Redman	

November Summary of Attendance and Financial Contributions

	Attendance	Bene./Mission	Current	Parsonage Improvements
Sunday, November 3	61	\$184.37	\$2,647.09	\$50.00
Sunday, November 10	60	\$216.55	\$2,738.95	\$50.00
Sunday, November 17	73	\$106.40	\$1,520.60	\$50.00
Sunday, November 24	63	\$102.20	\$2,099.81	\$50.00
January 1-November 24, 2019		\$7,517.41	\$97,643.19	\$5,960.00

Parsonage Improvements Update

The flooring and painting have been completed; the front door has not been replaced yet.

Expenses paid through September 9, 2019	\$8,081.13
Estimate for Door including installation	<u>\$1,400.00</u>
Total estimated cost	\$9,481.13
Contributions received through November 24, 2019	<u>\$5,960.00</u>
Estimated funds needed	\$3,521.13

December Anniversaries

12 – Sam & Ami Cordes (4)
 20 – Taylor & Brittany Buss (16)
 22 – Bob & Connie Rule (61)
 27 – Joel & Diane Buss (51)

December 2019 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>9:00 am 1st Sunday in Advent/ Worship/Holy Communion/ World Hunger Sunday</p> <p>10:00 am Coffee</p> <p>10:15 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Class</p>	2	<p>3</p> <p>9:30 am Ladies Bible Study</p>	<p>4</p> <p>6:00-7:00 pm Confirmation 6:15 pm Choir 6:30 pm Nominating Comm. 7:30 pm Adult Bible Class</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00 am Quilting</p>	6	7
<p>8</p> <p>9:00 am 2nd Sunday in Advent/ Worship</p> <p>10:00 am Coffee</p> <p>BLCW Cookies/Candy by the Pound</p> <p>10:15 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Class</p> <p>11:15 am Church Council</p>	9	<p>10</p> <p>9:30 am Ladies Bible Study</p>	<p>11</p> <p>6:00-7:00 pm Confirmation 6:15 pm Choir 7:30 pm Adult Bible Class</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:00 am Quilting</p>	13	14
<p>15</p> <p>9:00 am 3rd Sunday in Advent/ Worship/Holy Communion/ Noisy Nickels</p> <p>10:00 am Coffee</p> <p>10:15 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Class</p>	16	<p>17</p> <p>9:30 am Ladies Bible Study</p>	<p>18</p> <p>6:00-7:00 pm Confirmation 6:15 pm Choir 7:30 pm Adult Bible Class</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:00 am Quilting</p>	20	21
<p>22</p> <p>9:00 am 4th Sunday in Advent/ Worship/Thank Offering</p> <p>10:00 am Coffee</p> <p>Council fill Christmas sacks</p> <p>10:15 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Class</p>	23	<p>24</p> <p>7:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship/ Communion</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Christmas</p>	26	27	28
<p>29</p> <p>9:00 am Worship/Hymn Sing</p> <p>10:00 am Coffee</p>	30	31		<p>Email: bethelparkersburg@gmail.com Website: www.bethelparkersburg.org 'Like' & 'Follow' us on Facebook</p>		