

Address service requested

CONNECT WITH US

Bethlehem Lutheran

1121 Georgia Avenue
Sheboygan, WI 53081

www.ourbethlehem.com

Church: (920) 452-4331
infochurch@ourbethlehem.com

School: (920) 452-5071
infoschool@ourbethlehem.com

 [www.facebook.com/
ourbethlehem](http://www.facebook.com/ourbethlehem)

 [https://twitter.com/
ourbethlehem](https://twitter.com/ourbethlehem)

Rev. J. Patrick Niles
Administrative Pastor

Rev. Jeremy Hanson
Associate Pastor

Patrick Vanic
Principal

WORSHIP & BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Worship Times

Saturday - 5:30pm

Sunday - 8:00am & 10:30am

Wednesday - 6:00pm

Bible Studies

Saturday evening ~ 4:15 to 5:15pm

Sunday morning ~ 9:15 to 10:15am

Dec 2024

MEMBERSHIP



Sheboygan Lutheran
High School
Association

Sheboygan Area
Lutheran Schools
Association

December 2024

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

<p>1</p> <p>Worship w/HC 8:00am & 10:30am</p> <p>Bible classes & Sunday School 9:15am</p> <p>Advent by Candlelight Reimagined 6:00pm</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>LWML meeting 7:00pm</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Advent worship 8:30am & 6:00pm</p> <p>Read. Partners 1:00</p> <p>Confirm. class 3:30</p> <p>Soup Supper 5:00</p> <p>Youth Board 4:00 Stewardship 7:00</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Adult Choir practice 7:00pm</p>	<p>6</p> <p>LHS Christmas Concert 7:00pm</p>	<p>7</p> <p>LHS Christmas Concert 2:00pm</p> <p>Bible class 4:15pm</p> <p>Worship w/HC 5:30pm</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Worship w/HC 8:00am & 10:30am</p> <p>Bible classes 9:15am</p> <p>Sunday School 9:15am</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Home Opener Bethlehem Badger Basketball (Girls-B, Boys-B, Girls-A) 4:30pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Quilters 9:00am</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Advent worship 8:30am & 6:00pm</p> <p>Reading Partners 1:00pm</p> <p>Confirmation class 3:30pm</p> <p>Soup Supper 5:00pm</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Adult Choir practice 7:00pm</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Nursing Home Caroling 12:00pm-2:00pm</p> <p>Bible class 4:15pm</p> <p>Worship w/HC 5:30pm</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Worship w/HC 8:00am & 10:30am</p> <p>Bible classes 9:15am</p> <p>Sunday School 9:15am</p> <p>Youth Group Christmas 4:00-5:30pm</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Advent worship 8:30am & 6:00pm</p> <p>Reading Partners 1:00pm</p> <p>Confirmation class 3:30pm</p> <p>Soup Supper 5:00pm</p>	<p>19</p> <p>January Visitor Deadline (noon)</p> <p>Adult Choir practice 7:00pm</p> <p>Violinist Christmas Concert @ Bethlehem (Jaime Jorge) 7:00pm</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Bible class 4:15pm</p> <p>Worship w/HC 5:30pm</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Worship w/HC 8:00am & 10:30am</p> <p>Bible classes 9:15am</p> <p>Sunday School 9:15am</p>	<p>23</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>24</p> <p>NO SCHOOL (offices closed)</p> <p>Sunday School Service 4:00pm</p> <p>Family worship 6:00pm</p> <p>Candlelight worship 11:00pm</p>	<p>25</p> <p>NO SCHOOL (offices closed)</p> <p>Christmas Day worship 10:00am</p>	<p>26</p> <p>NO SCHOOL (offices closed)</p>	<p>27</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Bible class 4:15pm</p> <p>Worship w/HC 5:30pm</p>
<p>29</p> <p>Worship w/HC 8:00am & 10:30am</p> <p>Bible classes 9:15am</p>	<p>30</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>31</p> <p>NO SCHOOL (offices closed)</p> <p>New Year's Eve worship 6:00pm</p>	<p>1</p> <p>NO SCHOOL (offices closed)</p> <p>NO WORSHIP</p>			

◊◊ *Tischreden* with Pastor Hanson ◊◊

Welcome to Table Talk with Pastor Hanson! Pull up a chair and let's talk about the Advent & Christmas Season in our Church!

The following is a tongue-in-cheek expose of the commercial excess that has so obscured the seasons of Advent and Christmas in our land. May it serve as a reminder to all of us that we need to work hard to keep Christ the focus of the season.

The True Meaning of Advent

Being that this is the first Sunday of Advent I thought it might be useful to give some information about this season. Advent is a shortened form of the the word Advertisement, of course you probably already knew that. This time of year, we get blasted by advertisements day and night to buy gifts and to attend sales. There are some groups that contend that Advertisement actually starts on Black Friday and that this is in fact the first day of the Celebration that merchandiser consider Good Friday. During the season of Advertisement we are supposed to be of good cheer for some amorphous reason that is never quite mentioned. Rumor has it that it all leads up to the event of some child born a while ago that takes place on Christmas Day. Who this child was is not important just that we should know that the season is all about family and buying stuff. During Advertisement people say Happy Holiday's to each other. The reason for this is that during this time Malls decorate with lots of Holly so people have considered this to be Holly days. There are also other joyful greetings like Season Greetings and 40 percent off. People spend time in thanks that they have not yet exceeded their credit limit, and they might forget that they have a Savior, but they will remember the savings. During the season of Advertisement the days are still 24 hours but are measured in shopping days instead. It is also a tradition for this season to be somewhat penitential. Penances such as having to park in overflow parking two miles away from the mall are common. After Christmas comes *Advertisementide*. This is the ad season of after Christmas sales and even more discounts. Later on, in the shopping season comes the season of Lent. This is because you have to get money lent to you to pay off your shopping bills.

There are also some customs associated with Advertisement such as the Advertisement Wreath. Each week you take all of your junk mail and roll it up and tighten it with a rubber band and place it in your Advertisement Wreath. The third week it is traditional to use advertisements from red tag sales. You can also make or order a Advertisement Calendar, though most calendars come with advertisements this is a special edition where you mark off shopping days so you know when to panic when you haven't got everything on your list. So, relax and have a happy Advertisement for whatever reason we are supposed to be *sellebrating*.

JUST KIDDING!

The TRUE Meaning of Advent

From a commercial perspective there isn't much to gain from the birth of the Savior of the world. It is and always has been a gift meant to be received by all, a priceless gift given to provide something none of us can afford, our eternal salvation. The price will eventually be paid by the child born in Bethlehem, on a cross in Jerusalem. (continued.....)

I suppose one could say that the giving and receiving of a gift is what's at the heart of Christmas and is what has led to the dreaded commercialization, but it doesn't have to take away our joy or the sense of gratitude that we have all received from our Creator, our heavenly Father.

This end of the year newsletter article is my public service announcement on how to combat the ever-present secularization of one our most cherished holidays. By now most of us have already begun thinking about all the things we need to do to get to Christmas day. There are the presents to buy, the decorations to get out, the Christmas cards to mail, the parties to attend and/or plan for, travel planning, and more! Just typing that last sentence has left me feeling overwhelmed...

I believe the season of Advent provides us with a remedy for the pressures and responsibilities that accompany Christmas. Each of the four Sundays in Advent have a theme to help remind us what Christmas is all about. We have **hope, peace, joy and love** to accompany us on the journey to Bethlehem. Focusing on these themes is, I believe, a great way to help us focus on what really matters. Attending worship during the busiest of months is a good starting point as we will focus on those four themes on their given Sundays. But, what about the other six days of the week?

I'm glad you asked! What if you spent a little time each day focusing on the theme of each week of Advent? Read some Scripture or a devotional related to **hope, peace, joy or love**? What if you spent a little time in prayer thanking God for the **hope, peace, joy and love** He provides? Perhaps even meditating or reflecting on how those four themes are present in your life every day during Advent. How might 28 days of intentional time impact your feelings about Christmas? You'll never know if you don't try.

Christmas is truly one of our greatest gifts and it is a holiday that should be filled with joy and the corny Christmas spirit. If it isn't or hasn't been that for you, that is what is truly lamentable. Are you feeling the weight and burden of all commercialization of this most sacred of holidays? It doesn't have to be that way my siblings in Christ. Join us for worship during the four Sundays of Advent (which includes Christmas Eve and/or Christmas Day) and be intentional in seeking, like the shepherds, that Babe in a manger during the season of Advent. We have already received the greatest gift ever, so you've got nothing to lose.

In Christ's service,

◇◇ Pastor Hanson



December News

THANK YOU!

A great big THANK YOU to everyone who helped make this year's Craft & Vendor Fair a success. Whether you volunteered or attended, we thank you for your support. ~ Bethlehem PTL ~

IMPORTANT MESSAGES FROM THE SCRIP PROGRAM

- * Please note that Kwik Trip 10% and Kwik Trip 20% Grocery Only cards cannot be ordered online; only in-person sales and Scrip-on-the-Go orders are accepted. Also, there is a limit of \$300.00.
- * When placing online orders, *Pay-by-Check* orders will only be ordered from our supplier after payment is received. Orders & payment must be in by 3:00pm on Friday to be included in the next shipment.
- * The last day to place a Scrip-on-the-Go or special order before Christmas will be December 6. Any order after this date will be filled with the inventory that we have on hand. Please plan ahead. Scrip-on-the-Go will resume on January 2, 2025. Thank you for your cooperation.

DO I REALLY NEED TO STUDY THE BIBLE AS AN ADULT?

This question can be answered with another question: "Do I think the same way as I did when I was in 8th grade"? If the answer is "no", please read this excerpt from a devotion written by Rudolph F. Norden.

"The Bible was not written primarily to be a textbook of ancient history; nor is its poetry offered for its own sake; nor is its psychology written to teach that skill (although it is most profitable to take its lessons to heart?). The purpose of Holy Scripture is to lead us to faith in Jesus Christ, God's Son and our Savior, and from Him receive life in its fullness - eternal life."

Doesn't that sound like something that merits studying with our adult minds and hearts? Why not join our Saturday evening or Sunday morning Bible studies? Or join Rick Zeuner's 8-session Monday night series which begins January 6. Where will we see you?

AN APPEAL TO SATURDAY NIGHT WORSHIPPERS

How about adding the 4:15-5:15 pm Bible study to your Saturday worship time? All it takes is to add one hour on the front end of your time at church. Each of our pastors has interesting insights to share with you. Pastor Hanson will give you a deeper understanding of the Gospel of Luke.

Pastor Niles will present a non-traditional way of looking at the miraculous occurrence of Jesus' birth. Why not take advantage of these interesting studies?

PASTOR MEADOR TO GIVE A SPECIAL MESSAGE ON DECEMBER 8

Living as a church in our changing community is a challenge for Bethlehem, as well as for other churches. On December 8, Pastor Meador, the Mission Executive of the South Wisconsin District of the LCMS, will view God's action FOR us, IN us, and THROUGH us, to shape us into declarers of God's eternal glory, both for our benefit and for the benefit of our neighborhood.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT ANNOUNCEMENT

Celebrate the holiday season with us at a special Christmas concert featuring **Jaime Jorge, the acclaimed violinist**. The concert will be held at Bethlehem on December 19 at 7:00 pm. This family-friendly event promises to fill your evening with festive music and joy. Bring your loved ones and enjoy a magical night of holiday classics and beautiful melodies. We can't wait to share this wonderful experience with you! The event is free to attend, but a free-will offering will be taken to support Jaime's ministry costs.

RICK ZEUNER RETURNS TO BETHLEHEM

Beginning on Monday, January 6 from 6:00-7:00 pm, Rick will start an 8-week session in the Century Room. Watch for more info in upcoming bulletins and the January Visitor.

More December News

GUESS WHAT TIME IT IS?

It's Bethlehem Badger basketball time! There are several ways to help and support this program.

1). Use this link to sign up to work in the concession stand:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050445A8A72CA2FB6-concession#/>

2). Help stock the concession stand. Here is a list of items needed:

- ◆ 12-pks Coke, Diet Coke, Dr. Pepper, Root Beer, Orange, Lemonade, Mt. Dew, Brisk Iced Tea, Sprite
 - ◆ 20-oz bottles of Gatorade (blue, light blue, purple, red, orange, yellow, white)
- ◆ String cheese (individually wrapped), Go-Go-Squeeze, juice boxes, Capri Sun, jars of salsa, fruit snacks (individually wrapped), variety pack of snack-size chips, bags of nacho chips, cans of nacho cheese, cases of bottled water, plastic spoons, plastic forks, napkins.
Monetary donations or gift cards (Walmart, Aldi, Kwik Trip, Piggly Wiggly, Festival) are also appreciated and can be dropped off in the church office.

3). Cheer on the Badgers by finding a seat in the stands. The first home game is December 9.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Join the Adult Choir and the Youth Group/families as they bring Christmas cheer to a few nursing homes (Pine Haven & Sheboygan Senior Community).

Plan to meet as a group in the Century Room by 11:30 am on Saturday, December 14.

They do plan on carpooling. Please add your name to the sign-up sheet located in the Century Room.

UPCOMING YOUTH GROUP DATES

DECEMBER: Attention junior and senior youth - we will celebrate Christmas together on Sunday, December 15 from 4:00-5:30 pm in the gym & cafeteria. Watch for fliers around the Century Room, which will be coming soon!

JANUARY: Attention junior and senior youth - instead of our regularly scheduled youth group evening on January 26, plan to join St. Paul Lutheran Church, Sheboygan Falls that day, at the Sheboygan Falls Aquatic Center from noon-2:00 pm for a free swimming event.

BETHLEHEM FACILITY RESERVATIONS

If you are an individual or group looking to reserve space at Bethlehem (Century Room, library, gym, kitchen, cafeteria, etc.) please make sure to call the church office. Thank you for your cooperation.

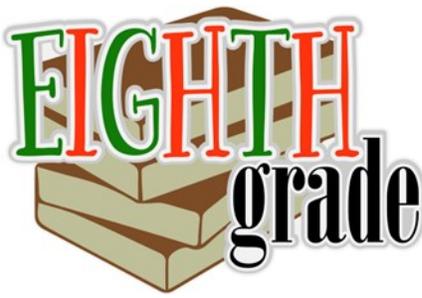
JANUARY VISITOR DEADLINE

If you would like to submit information for the January Visitor, please have your information to the church office no later than noon on Thursday, December 19, 2024. Please feel free to email amy.weir@ourbethlehem.com or drop it off in the church office with a note that it is for the Visitor.

WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANTS

Gary Weber - November 25, 2024
Joyce Zeinemann - November 19, 2024
Charles Smith Jr. - November 17, 2024
Sharon Thimmig - November 11, 2024





Bethlehem Lutheran’s 8th grade class has had a lot going on in the last few weeks! The class won the PBIS rewards for first quarter by having earned the most tickets for positive behavior. As a reward, the class was able to go bowling at Lakeshore Lanes in mid-November. It was great to see the students having fun together and earning rewards for their positive attitudes!

Fall sports have all wrapped up. The 8th grade students ran their last cross-country races for Bethlehem and the girls played their last volleyball games as Badgers. They had fantastic seasons in both sports and we hope they continue building on those skills and efforts in high school. We’re also extremely proud to say that Elanore was the first girl to represent Bethlehem at the National Lutheran Cross Country Championship! Now the 8th graders and other upper grade students turn their attention to basketball season at Bethlehem.

In their classes, the 8th graders worked on creating an egg-drop out of only plastic bags, cardboard, and tape for science class. In ELA they are analyzing *The Outsiders* novel by S.E. Hinton. In history class they’ve been digging deeper to understand the Constitution and what they can do with their rights. During art class they have been hard at work creating mixed media projects. In music they’re studying how music impacts the user experience in video games they love. In computer class they’ve collaborated to create websites using HTML coding.

The 8th grade class also is looking forward to presenting their Advent service, together with the 3K, 4K, 5K and 1st grade classes. They get to share their Advent message on Wednesday, December 11th, at both the morning and evening services.

You’re now up-to-date on 8th grade news!



CHURCH DECORATION FUND



Please consider donating a monetary gift to the Altar Guild's Church Decoration Fund. All donor names, along with the designation as to whether the gift is being given in memory, in honor, or for blessings received, will be published.

Please designate which category, by circling in memory or honor of.

Make checks payable to **Bethlehem Altar Guild.** (drop off in the church office).

**Deadline for submitting donations
is noon on Friday, December 13, 2024**

Given by: _____ in memory/honor of _____

Given by: _____ in memory/honor of _____

Given by: _____ for blessings received

Given by: _____ for blessings received

“There are so many things I wish I could share with my children, but whenever we are together, it seems we are always racing off to a soccer game or dance recital. We never really get to talk.” This was the sentiment that Rachel was expressing to her sister as the two were enjoying an unseasonably warm November day on the screened porch. Rachel’s husband passed away suddenly about two years ago and since then, these two sisters have spent more time together.

“I know what you mean,” said Karen. “But that changed for me a few years ago when Bill and I put our estate plan together. We worked with an LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor, and she kept insisting that we create a statement of faith to share with our family and friends. She called it a Family Blessing. The counselor also urged us to meet formally with our kids to share the details of our estate plan with them. It was then that Bill and I both read our Family Blessings to the kids out loud. By the end we were all shedding some tears and hugging. It was the first time in a long time that we had deep conversations about our confidence in Jesus, rather than just talking about attending Sunday service. It was great.”

Rachel responded, “You know, since Fred died, I have been needing to review my estate plan. Maybe I’ll give the counselor a call and see if she can help me do the same thing.”

Your estate plan is not just about money and laws. It is about relationships and sharing Jesus. To get started on your journey and kindle those conversations with the people you love most, contact Craig Toerpe, Gift Planning Counselor of the LCMS Foundation to help facilitate these important conversations at 262-707-3005 or craig.toerpe@lfnd.org



UPCOMING WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

ADVENT WORSHIP

Worship with us on the following Wednesdays in December - services are 8:30 am and 6:00 pm. Please remember that Soup Suppers are taking place at 5:00 pm on these Wednesdays as well.

- ** December 4 - presented by grades 4, 5 & 6
- ** December 11 - presented by grades 3K, 4K, 5K, 1 & 8
- ** December 18 - presented by grades 2, 3 & 7

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

- ** December 24 - 4:00 pm, Sunday School service
- ** December 24 - 6:00 pm, Family service
- ** December 24 - 11:00 pm, Candlelight service
- ** December 25 - 10:00 am, Christmas Day service
- ** December 28/29 - regular weekend services
- ** December 31 - 6:00 pm, New Year’s Eve service
- ** January 1 - NO service

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

PERSONAL INFORMATION CHANGES

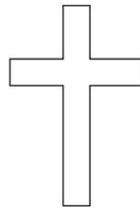
If you have changed your name, address, phone number or email address, please notify the church office with your information. You can call the church office at 920-452-4331 or email amy.weir@ourbethlehem.com with your new/current information. Thank you for your help.

ROOM RESERVATION REMINDER

Just a reminder to make sure that you let the church office know if and when you need to reserve a room so we can be sure that there are no conflicts. Thank you!

VISIT US ONLINE

Bethlehem Lutheran Church and School is on Facebook. Please also visit us at our website, www.ourbethlehem.com. Check out the main page where you will find information about upcoming events and activities. Scroll down to see a calendar of important items. Find helpful information by clicking on the various tabs under *Church* and *School*.



VISITOR SPONSORSHIP

To help us defray expenses for producing and mailing our monthly newsletter, we have established a sponsorship program which includes a congregational contributor for the cost of \$50 per year; and a commercial contributor for the cost of \$120 per year. If interested, please drop off your payment or call the church office at 920-452-4331.

Dennis & Nancy Bearns
Sandra Fischer
Leonard Johnson
George & Karen Haecker
Linda Hulbert-Ertel

Congregational Sponsors

Bev Fischer
Bob & Lori Gottowski
Linda Nikisch
Beverly Bauer

Jim & Judy Heinecke
Cliff & Gail Schlegel
Anita Krimmel
Keith & Christine Wyckoff
James Schmidt

Advanced Comfort Systems
Irish Roofing

Commercial Sponsors

Boneck Printing
Irish Studios

Irish Hauling
Knier Storage