



Star on the Hill

The Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Lanesboro, Minnesota

December 2025



Christmas Celebrations 2025

Contact us at:

200 Kenilworth Ave S.

P.O. Box 314

Lanesboro, MN 55949

507-467-3344

bethlehem@acegroup.cc

website:

www.staronthehill.com

Facebook: Bethlehem
Lutheran Church, Lanesboro

Pastor Heidi Wallace

402-870-1972

pastorheidwallace@gmail.com

Watch our worship on
Facebook Sunday mornings
at 10:00 am

Bethlehem Lutheran Church,
Lanesboro

Financial Summary

Year to Date thru October 2025

Income: \$141,660

Expenses: \$142,568

**Sunday, December 7th
worship will be at
8:30 am in place of 10:00**

**Sunday, December 14th
Children's Christmas
Program during
Worship.**

**Christmas Eve
worship at 7:00 pm
Service of Carols and
Candlelight with Holy
Communion**

**Christmas Day
No Service**

**Sunday, December 28
10:00 AM Service
Lessons and Carols**

All services will be
broadcast live on
Bethlehem's Facebook
page.



Saturday December 6 is our
Prayer Partner revelation at
Sylvan Manor. 2:30 p.m. in
the community room.

Partners are invited to bring
a donation for the Food
Shelf.

Sign up for next year by
contacting either Jacque
Crutcher or Harriet
Lawston.

Annual Meeting Date

The annual meeting for our
congregation will be
Sunday, January 25th,
following worship.
We will also need 3 new
Council Members, so
please consider joining.
If interested, reach out to
any current council member
or contact the office.

The deadline to submit
written materials for the
annual report is Monday,
January 5.





Even without being there, I know that one of my former colleague's offices at the Nebraska Synod office will soon be filled with Grinches. One might think the reason is because he loves the book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* or any of the movies based on the book. The truth is less about the character than the church calendar.

For four weeks before Christmas, we celebrate the season of Advent. It is a time of waiting, preparation, and expectation. We look toward the coming of the Messiah, not only as he did as we remember with our Christmas programs, but also as he will as we recite in our Creeds. Some congregations have even returned to the former practice of observing seven weeks of Advent. Whether four or seven weeks in length, Advent is a separate season from Christmas in the church year. And, as such, it has its own color, practices, and music. This brings us to my former colleague's collection.

In one of the congregations he served, it became known that he preferred to sing Advent hymns during the season of Advent and reserve Christmas hymns until the season of Christmas (the twelve days of Christmas; December 25 through January 5). The administrative assistant with whom he worked at that time felt that was "Grinch-like" and presented him with his first Grinch. And – as happens with many collections – when people noticed he had one, they gifted him more. Soon there will be Grinches on coat rack, credenza, desk, bookshelf, door . . .

For quite some time, I thought similarly to my former colleague. There are some wonderful and underused Advent hymns and it is a short season in which to sing them.

Then, another colleague pointed out what our children are hearing throughout the season. Considering how repetition works with remembering, they know the words to "All I Want for Christmas Is You" better than "Away in a Manger".

So, Christmas will enter into Advent in our music just as it does in our decorations. We will wait for, prepare for, and expect the coming of Immanuel (God with Us) while we celebrate that God is always with us. We will sing of what has been and what will be.

And perhaps our hearts will grow three sizes . . . or at least large enough to let the Christ Child in to stay.

Hope, peace, joy, and love to you in the seasons of Advent and Christmas and all the year through.

Pastor Heidi <><



***Sunday, Dec. 7th**

***Sunday, Dec. 21st**

***Wednesday, Dec. 24th**



***Sunday, December 7th**

First Reading: (NLT)
Isaiah 11:1-10

Second Reading: (NLT)
Romans 15:4-13

Doors: ** Need

Ushers: Erik & Laurie
Overland, Denise & John
Dahle

Reader: **Need

Altar Care/HC: Jody & Tim
Ruen

Refreshments: Jody & Tim
Ruen, Laurie & Erik Overland

Sunday, December 14th

First Reading: (NLT)
Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalms: 1:46b-55 (NLT)

Second Reading: (NLT)
James 5:7-10

Doors: Vern Groen

Ushers: Vern & Diann Groen,
Judy & Gary Kingsbury

Reader: Tim Kiehne

Altar Care: Jody & Tim Ruen

Refreshments: Chris Olson,
Laurie & Erik Overland

***Sunday, December 21st**

First Reading: (NLT)
Isaiah 7:10-16

Second Reading: (NLT)
Romans 1:1-7

Doors: Tim Ruen

Ushers: Tim & Joy Ruen,
Charles Ruen

Reader: **Need

Altar Care/HC: Jody & Tim
Ruen

Refreshments: Jody & Tim
Ruen, Tim & Julie Kiehne

***Wednesday, December 24th**

First Reading: (NLT)
Isaiah 9:2-7

Second Reading: (NLT)
Titus 2:11-14

Doors: **Need

Ushers: Tim, Jody & Lynsey
Ruen

Reader: **Need

Altar Care/HC: Jody & Lynsey
Ruen

Refreshments: NA

Sunday, December 28th

First Reading: (NLT)
Isaiah 63:7-9

Psalms: 148 (NLT)

Second Reading: (NLT)
Hebrews 2:10-18

Doors: **Need

Ushers: **Need
Reader: Tom Holst

Altar Care: Jody & Lynsey
Ruen

Refreshments: Vern & Diann
Groen, Tom & Sue Holst

**** ADVENT ****

**Advent Readers & Candle
Lighters Needed for Dec 7th thru
Dec 24th. Please sign-up in the
fellowship hall.

January Service Group
Please reach out to your
Group Coordinators to
sign up for a Sunday of
Service.

Members of the January
service group are
Scott & Dawn Bearson,
Darrel & Karen Flattum,
Bev Hanson,
Mark & Pat Hanson,
Jennifer Haug,
Philip & Clorees Haug,
David & Melanie Haugen,
Jeremiah & Sasha Holst,
Glen & Julie Jensson,
Shayn & Terri Jensson,
Jamie & Makaila Kelly,
Bob & Phyllis Penheiter,
Paul & Darcy Peterson,
James & Brenda Semmen,
Janel Torgerson and
Mike & Raquel Torgerson.
Group coordinators are
Bob & Phyllis Penheiter
Glen & Julie Jensson

Senior Dining Servers
at Kenilworth Apartments

Dec. 5 : Phyllis Penheiter,
Denise Dahle

Dec.12th : Jennifer Wood
Norine Ask

Dec.19th : Dean Benson &
Mindy Albrecht-Benson

Our Confirmands



Lux Holst, Theodore Pruett,
Oliver Hanson

Knox Holst, Bristol Clarke

Those Living with Cancer

Diane Haugen,
Tom Papenfuss,
Carroll Gilbertson,
Mavis Musselman,
Cora Slominsky
(niece of Matt & Stacy Schultz)
Alex Hall
Nancy Hall
Renee Reinhardt

Those Living in Care Centers

Jerry Johnson at Mn Veterans
Home, Preston MN

Sandy Dybing at Birchwood
Cottages, North Mankato

Lois Gilbertson,
Marlin & Ardella Miner
at Chosen Valley Assisted
Living, Chatfield

Don Lukkason at Traditions
In Preston.

Hospice Care at Home

Katie Ruen
Edward Ruen (Husband
and caretaker)
Lanesboro

Our Members in the Military

Esme Decker, daughter of
Sara Xavier and Eric Decker

Lisa Peterson Abell, daughter
of Linda (Hareldson) Peterson

Leon Peterson, son of Linda
(Hareldson) Peterson

Claire Peterson, daughter of
Joe & Jody Peterson

Devin Troendle, son of Pat &
Chris Troendle, grandson of
Ed Taylor

******Please notify the office If
there are updates to any of
these lists**



Our Family Night/Confirmation
Continues at Fountain
Lutheran Church on
Wednesday nights Dec 3rd
Thru Dec. 17th. We are off for
Dec. 24th and 31st, and will
Resume at Bethlehem on
Jan. 7th 2026 for the next
6 weeks.

6:00 p.m. Supper
6:30 p.m. Learning
Come with your entire family.
Invite your neighbors to come.
All are welcome!!

Meatballs



Thank You, Thank You to
everybody that helped with our
Meatball Dinner. It was a Very
successful year. We had several
generous donations and lots of
good help. We had approximately
150 workers, including several
students, which we love to see.
We were able to pay back the
roof fund balance and towards the
general fund, approximately
\$9,600.

Thankful
Carrie Hanson

Are you looking for
some Fun and
Adventure in 2026?



Tom Holst will be organizing a
trip to the Boundary Waters For
the summer of 2026.
Permits need to be secured in
January so anyone interested in
more information, please contact
Tom Holst at 507-951-8941
as soon as possible.

Women of the ELCA

WELCA activities

Wednesday, December 3rd
9:00 am WELCA Quilting Day

Wednesday, December 17th
9:00 am WELCA Bible study

PLEASE NOTE: Men are also welcome to attend our WELCA Bible study.



Anyone interested in taking part in the **knitting ministry** may contact Sue Holst at 507 676-3239 or Jacque Crutcher at 507 259-2453.



Anyone interested in joining the **quilting ministry** may contact Elve Albrecht at 507 467-2910 or Phyllis Penheiter at 507-272-8643.



The mitten basket awaits your donations of new or gently used Mittens, gloves, caps, scarves, and socks are distributed by SEMCAC through the Preston Food Shelf. We usually fill the basket twice during the fall. Please help keep someone warm this winter.

There are two wonderful ways to give to others this Christmas.

1. Lutheran World Relief

Give.lwr.org

Your caring gift this Christmas is matched — dollar for dollar — up to a total of \$100,000. Your love will deliver 2X the food, water, medical supplies and shelter, providing safe places for families who've been forced from their homes.

Any gifts received after the match is met will be used, as always, to provide lifesaving essentials to your most vulnerable neighbors around the world.

2. ELCA Good Gifts **Good gifts.ELCA.org**

From farm animals to school essentials to small business loans to clean water and so much more, Good Gifts makes a difference around the world.



Annual winter service project

Members of Bethlehem will once again take out the trash for the residents of Kenilworth and Sylvan Manor Apartments, December through March.

You will stop by on Tuesday afternoon or early evening to collect trash bags left in the hallways and haul them to the outside dumpster.

Contact the church office or sign up for a Tuesday on the sheet posted by the Sunday school stairs. Thank you to families who have already volunteered:

December 2: Vern Groen

December 9:

December 16:

December 23: Jody & Lynsey Ruen

December 30:

MINUTES

Thursday, November 13, 2025

Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Lanesboro, MN Congregation Council Meeting

Members present: Tom Brudvig, Nate Boyum, Andrew Pruett, JoAnna Pruett, Pastor Heidi, Carrie Hanson

Absent: Brett Clarke, Tom Holst, Julie Kiehne

Others present: Deane Benson, Ed Taylor

Prior to the meeting:

- a) Andrew & JoAnna Pruett brought forth a concern about a potential gas leak outside the church, due the strong smell upon arrival. Minnesota Energy called to inspect. Arrived after meeting and concluded furnace in basement not working properly. Gas not being used efficiently and dangerously high carbon monoxide detected. Furnace shut down.
- b) Deane Benson took members to entryway to do a front door demonstration as doors have not been locked properly. Outside double doors should be locked and inside double doors should be left unlocked when closing up. This includes both the north and south doors in the Narthex.

Established Quorum

- 1) Call to Order by Tom Brudvig at 650
- 2) Opening Prayer/Devotion – Pastor Heidi read the Psalm of Thanksgiving, Psalm 95 and offered a prayer.
- 3) Church member input and/or guest speaker time - done
- 4) Additions to agenda & approval of agenda
- 5) Consent Agenda-approved as presented:
 - a) Secretary's Report-reviewed October minutes submitted by JoAnna Pruett. Plan to omit military time.
 - b) Treasurer's Report-submitted and reviewed, Ed Taylor did some education on the report for council members.
 - c) Pastoral Report-spent a day in St. Peter with Bishop Hassanally who approved attendance at the Systems Academy-focusing on family systems theory. The Synod would pay for attendance. Pastor Heidi plans to use this to teach future classes between the SE and SW Synods. Confirmation class has had great attendance. Earlier this month, 6 confirmed. 1 funeral. Working on putting a Sunday school program together for youth. Christmas program-December 14.
 - d) Council Committee Reports
 - i) Education – none
 - ii) Youth – none
 - iii) Stewardship and Finance
 - iv) Property – Nate Boyum got a bid on a dehumidifier for the basement from American Waterworks. The price is \$1840.00, and \$156.28 for a 6pack of filters. Will follow-up on to see how often filters need to be changed. 2 windows broken that need fixed before winter. Will have Marty Hungerholt check to see if he can fix the windows. Motion made by Carrie Hanson to turn dehumidifier request over to the endowment committee.
 - v) Endowment – to discuss dehumidifier at next meeting.
 - vi) Personnel – see below-policy submitted for review.
 - vii) WELCA update –none to report.

6) Old Business

- a) Auction and meatball dinner. (Proceeds from Meatball Dinner.)
 - i) \$9,600 profit, 540 meals served, used to help pay off the roof, the rest goes to the General Fund.
 - ii) All costs covered by private donations and \$1750 in Thrivent Cards.
 - iii) Craft table generated \$649 – which is included in the \$9,600 total.
- b) Lawnmower purchased-pay or reimburse? \$350 spent-plan to reimburse.
- c) Ceiling repair in kitchen
- d) Roof repair fund: complete?

7) New Business

- a) Paid leave Administrators and church officer listing for State of Minnesota.
 - 1.) Quarterly report review with Rhonda-Tom B will do.
 - 2.) Policy for approval of Paid leave and ESST. Written request from employee.
- b) Document Fountain contribution
- c) Personnel Policies. Template to review, modify and implement.
- d) Do we have winter snow and ice protocol in place? Deane to take care of sidewalks and apply salt. Need to work on plowing with the city.
- e) Fountain request to alter service times. (Bethlehem church service first on occasion.) Once a month? Permanent change of time? - Will plan to switch service times on December 7, so Fountain can have some extra time with Pastor Heidi.
- f) Christmas Eve Services- 5p Fountain, 7p Lanesboro
- g) Next meeting-12/11@630.

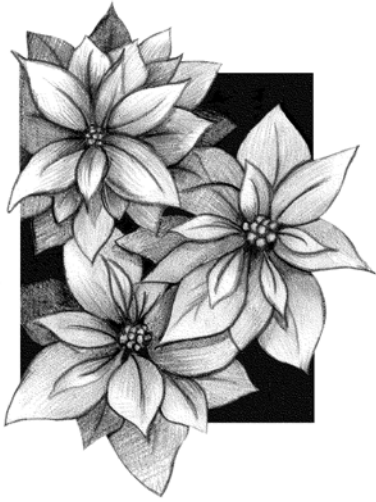
8) Words of Appreciation – Who can we recognize this month for their faithful service to our church community? Carrie Hanson, the donors, and volunteers, for the Meatball Dinner

9) Adjournment - Motion to adjourn by JoAnna Pruett, and Carrie Hanson 2nd, approved.

10) Closing Prayer – with the Lord's Prayer

Submitted by: JoAnna Pruett - “published but not approved”

We Welcome Your Poinsettias



You are cordially invited to provide poinsettias or other flowers to decorate our sanctuary during the Christmas Season.

Please tell us if the plant is given “in honor of” or “in memory of” a loved one, or even in celebration of a birthday, baptism, anniversary, etc., so this information can be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

Please complete the form below and deliver it to the church office no later than Thursday, December 18.

Please bring your plant to church by Tuesday, December 23.

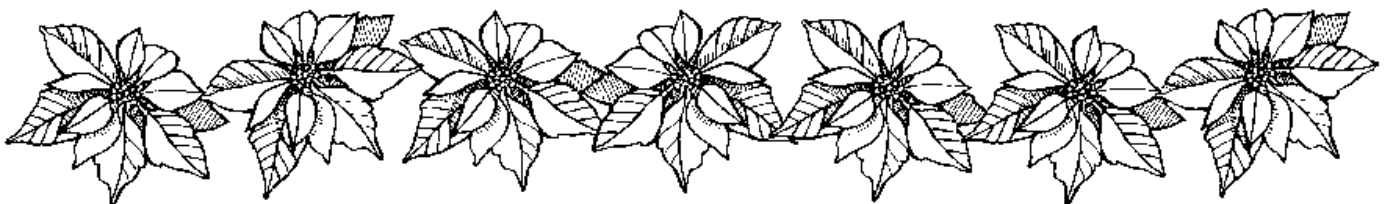
I am giving a plant:

Name _____

____ **In memory of** _____

____ **In honor of** _____

____ **In celebration of** _____



Bethlehem Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 314
Lanesboro, MN 55949-0314

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2025