



Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church and School is a community of sinners trusting in the forgiveness given by the crucified and risen Christ, offering peace, joy, stability, and purpose to a despairing and chaotic world by sharing this gospel through our words and deeds.

The Bethlehem STAR January 2025

[Having turned water into good wine,] this, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And His disciples believed in Him. (John 2:11)

From Christmas, we move into the season of Epiphany. “Epiphany” is a Greek word that means “revealing, showing, making manifest, making visible.” If Christmas is like God’s gift to the world all wrapped up, then Epiphany is like God unwrapping the gift, taking it out of the box, and putting it to use, showing all the great things it can do for the world. Jesus is God’s amazing gift to the world. See what He can do! Listen to what He says! We are amazed at our Lord Jesus and trust in Him. That’s Epiphany.

During Advent and Christmas, many of the messages from the angels were private in nature. Gabriel was in the holy place of the temple, visiting Zechariah as he was doing his priestly duties. Gabriel visited Mary, assumedly by herself in her room. An angel visited Joseph in a dream. Starting at Jesus’ birth, the good news of a great joy becomes public. An angel visits a group of shepherds outside of Bethlehem. The public witness, teaching, and preaching will continue as Jesus begins His public ministry in Galilee.

The season of Epiphany, starting with the visit of the magi, also highlights the fact that this child Jesus is the savior *of the world*. Yes, he was born in Judea, raised in Israel, and most of his ministry took place within Israel and Judea. Yet, magi from other nations, perhaps from east Africa or central Asia, were guided by a star to worship the one born king of the Jews. After Jesus died and rose again, He clearly gave His great directive, “Make disciples of ALL nations” by baptizing and teaching. The good news of a great joy is indeed for ALL the people on earth.

As the good news of Jesus has reached you, will you also bear witness to the Savior? Who still lives in darkness and needs to see THE great light—for true joy, hope, peace and purpose? Make Jesus known!

At Bethlehem Lutheran Church and School, we will continue to make Jesus known this Epiphany season, and beyond.

Looking to Jesus,

Pastor Chaplain Witte





PRINCIPAL'S PAGE



Epiphany greetings to the entire Bethlehem community! We will be resuming school from the Christmas break at the normal time on Monday, January 6th.

The end of the second quarter is in early January. This means the year is about halfway over. It seems like a few days ago it was August and we were starting the year. The end of the second quarter gives us an opportunity to celebrate the progress students have made and make plans to continue to achieve as we move toward our academic goals for the year.

Monday, January 20th we will have the day off to commemorate MLK Jr. Day. Presidents of both parties have called on Americans to honor Dr. King's legacy by making it a day of service to the community. I encourage everyone to find some way to make their community brighter during that weekend. Bethlehem students, if you do any community service don't forget to log your hours using the forms hanging on the bulletin board outside the office.

We observe National Lutheran Schools Week in January. We will be celebrating with 65 other LCMS schools in the Ohio District and almost 200,000 LCMS students worldwide. The week will be full of festivities, starting with our 2nd and 3rd grade students participating in worship at Bethlehem on January 26th. Each day of the week will be anchored by a scripture verse that will inform our theme for the day. Students will also learn about the work of the Gospel in Kenya through Lutheran Hour Ministries. We will have our Lutheran Schools Week breakfast on Monday where we invite the school community to share a meal together. Wednesday we will be having a Magic of Science presentation for all of our students. Thursday we will have a small career fair where we have asked some of our Bethlehem parents to speak about their vocations to the various classes. All in all it will be a week full of fun and excitement.

Our chapel offerings in January will be going to support HTC in Dayton. We will be collecting new and gently used toys. Toys must be in good condition and have all of their pieces.

Our Christian character word for January is Encouragement. Our verse for the month is Hebrews 10:24, "Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works." To encourage the students, each month we have our Mustard Seed Award. At the end of the month each teacher chooses a student in their class who best exemplifies the Christian character word and that student receives a certificate and a keychain with a little mustard seed in it after one of our chapel services. It is wonderful to hear classmates cheer for the students who win these awards each month.

Thank you for continually lifting up the students and staff at Bethlehem in prayer.

In His Service,

Mr. Ferguson

Dependence

*Give us each day our daily bread...**Luke 11:3 ESV***

One of God's chief desires for us—one that we constantly struggle against—is that we live our lives in dependence on Him.

When the children of Israel were wandering in the wilderness following their deliverance from bondage in Egypt, they depended on God for everything. God could have taken care of them by changing the wilderness into paradise, but that's not generally how He works. He provided, day by day, for all the needs of His people. He provided the column of fire and smoke to guide them and miraculous food for their bodies. The manna He provided was not to be stockpiled, but to be gathered each day as each had need.

God was faithful to provide for His people in the wilderness and after they had settled in the Promised Land, He still wanted them to rely on Him alone. They however, wanted to “be like all the other nations” and have an earthly king. God warned them that they wouldn't like it, but He allowed them to have their way (1 Samuel 8).

It is no accident that the Lord taught us to pray that God “give us this day our daily bread” and not “allow us to accumulate enough wealth that we can take care of ourselves.” The Concordia commentary on Luke translates 11:3 as “our bread for the coming day keep giving to us day by day” to emphasize that we pray for God to take care of us this day, not worrying, but trusting that He will also take care of us when tomorrow becomes this day.

In Luke 12, Christ tells us of the rich fool who put his trust in the things of this world and was not prepared on the night when “his life was demanded of him.” The material things we acquire and stockpile are of no more use to us when our lives are demanded of us than they were to him. We become “like all the other nations” when we fail to honor our Lord as the One who “sustains all things by His powerful word.”

In the midst of the barren desert, none of God's chosen people woke in the morning with the expectation that they would be able to provide for themselves. Without the column of fire and smoke, they would be lost. Without God's active and evident provision of food, they would starve. They knew that either God would provide all their needs for them or they would perish. It is only our arrogance and blindness that prevents us from coming to the same conclusion today.

By His Grace,

Steve Fugate

Elder



January Birthdays

Bethany Huffman	2
Chris Nelson	3
Jack Humphreys	5
Jim Carlson	6
Elizabeth Lindsey	12
Edna England	15
Nehemiah Johnson	
Karl Maron	17
Thomas Tressler	20
Adaline Engel	
Meagan Zulfer	21
Emma Olcott	26
Jodi Crosby	29
Joyce Whitt	

January Anniversary

Brian & Julia Bell.....	4
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Nathan Huffman	1
Bob Koogler	4
Aaron Fry.....	10
Andrew Fry	
Amanda Humphreys	
Brian Miessler	
Nehemiah Johnson	30



Thank you to all who gave Christmas cards, greetings, treats, and gifts. Your kindness made the Christmas season even greater than it already is. We are blessed to be here at Bethlehem!

-Pastor, Alison, Nathaniel, Joshua, Zoe & Joseph Witte

Jonathan Fiene

Matt Greggerson

Nesta Harris

Louise Hellickson

Doris Humphreys

Bob Koogler



Ezra Miller

Jean Robinson

Marilyn Scheu

Elaine Schultz

Robyn Shipman

Alison Witte

Do you have any amazing, thought provoking or inspiring Christmas cards that you purchased or received? Pastor Witte will collect them and expound upon a few of them during a future Advent and Christmas season.



LWML Epiphany Lunch:

Not wanting the Christmas season to end, the LWML decided to have their annual luncheon on this Saturday, January 4, 2025 (the tenth day of Christmas – time for lords a leaping!). We will gather at the Blueberry Café, 2932 S. Dixie Drive in Kettering. Please let Eileen Hitzeman know so she can call ahead for a table for us all. Also let Eileen know if you want to carpool and she will arrange that.



The Bethlehem STAR

January 2025

Rev. Keith F. Witte

Bethlehem Lutheran Church & School

1240 S. Maple Avenue, Fairborn, OH 45324

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



Lutheran School Week

January 26—31, 2025

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Mr. Scott Ferguson, Principal

Mrs. Michelle Zulfer, Vice Principal

Sunday

Worship Services at 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Bible Classes at 9:30 a.m.

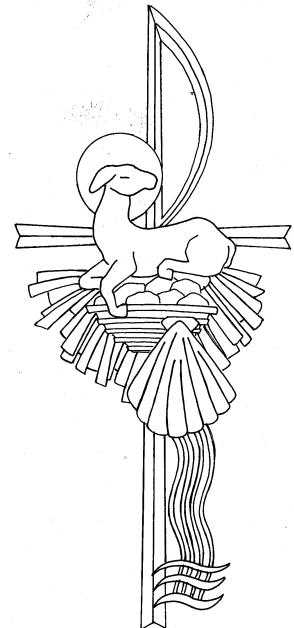
Wednesday

Bible Study at 9:30 a.m.

Chapel Matins Service at 8:45 a.m. (when school is in session)

Advent/Lenten Service at 7 pm

February 2025 issue deadline: Sunday, January 19th.



"We seek to honor and glorify the Triune God by sharing our faith in Jesus Christ as man's only Savior."