



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

April 2026

*Jesus Christ, my sure defense And my Savior, now is living!
Knowing this, my confidence Rests upon the hope here given,
Though the night of death be fraught Still with many-an anxious thought.*

*I am flesh and must return To the dust, whence I am taken;
But by faith I now discern That from death I shall awaken
With my Savior to abide In His glory, at His side. (LSB 741, v1,4)*

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!
(He is risen indeed! Alleluia!)

Dearly beloved of Bethlehem,

Starting April 5, we will focus on Jesus' resurrection from the dead and why this is important for our faith. The preaching emphasis will be on the Epistle Readings, which highlight how sure God's promises are and how sure we are whenever we hear and believe His promises in Christ crucified and risen.

The newest edition of the Explanation to the Small Catechism highlights how sure we can be in Jesus' resurrection. Question 169: What does the Bible teach about Jesus' resurrection?

Answer: Scripture teaches that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day and appeared bodily to His disciples.

- ✠ Acts 10:40-41: God chose witnesses of Jesus' resurrection who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead.
- ✠ 1 Corinthians 15:4-8: Jesus appeared to more than 500 hundred brothers after He rose from the dead.
- ✠ Acts 1:3: Jesus presented Himself alive...by many proofs for 40 days.

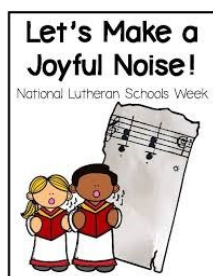
Answer: Christ's resurrection is the comforting testimony that

- A. He is the Son of God (Romans 1:4)
- B. His teaching is true (John 18:37)
- C. The Father has accepted Christ's sacrifice for the reconciliation of the world (Romans 5:10)
- D. All who believe in Christ will rise to eternal life (John 11:25-26; John 14:19; 1 Corinthians 15:22-23)

All these comforting testimonies are sure and certain because Jesus rose from the dead. I am looking forward to making a joyful noise unto the Lord with you this Easter Season. For nothing inspires our hearts to sing unto God more than His salvation in Christ crucified and risen.

Your dear pastor,

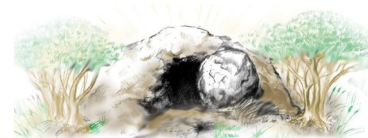
Pastor Witte



Bethlehem Lutheran School 2025 –2026 School Year News

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

As we enter the month of April, we are reminded of the words of the angel at the empty tomb: *“He is not here, for He has risen, as He said.”* The Resurrection shapes everything we do at Bethlehem Lutheran School. It fills our classrooms with hope, our worship with joy, and our daily work with purpose. What a blessing it is to share this Good News with our students and families, many of whom may be hearing it clearly for the very first time.



Strategic Plan

Our School Board is in the process of creating a “needs-assessment” for a strategic plan for the years 2026-2029. As a part of this, we are creating a survey for members of the congregation. Please be on the lookout for this survey! We will have both an electronic and a paper version available.

Easter Celebration Chapel – April 2



On April 2, our students will gather for a special Easter chapel service. Although this takes place before Easter Sunday, it provides a meaningful opportunity for all of our students, many who are unchurched, to celebrate the Resurrection and boldly proclaim, “He is risen indeed!” This service is always a highlight of our year. Chapel starts at 2.30pm and all church members are invited to worship with us.

Easter Break – April 3 and 6–10

School will be closed April 3 and 6–10 in observance of the Easter holiday. We pray this time brings rest, renewal, and joyful reflection on Christ’s victory over sin and death.

Month of the Military Child – Spirit Days on April 14 & 16

In honor of the Month of the Military Child, we will hold two special spirit days:


April 14: Red, White, and Blue Day

April 16: Purple Up! Day (purple symbolizes the combined colors of all U.S. military branches)

On April 16, we will also host our second “Boots and Brew” gathering for military-connected parents—a time for fellowship, encouragement, and community.



State Testing Begins – April 20

 Our state standardized testing season begins April 20. We ask the congregation to keep our students and teachers in prayer as they approach this important period with diligence and confidence.

K–1 Students Sing in Worship – April 26

Our Kindergarten and First Grade students will participate in the 10:45 a.m. worship service on April 26, sharing their voices in praise. We are grateful for opportunities like this that connect our school ministry with the life of the congregation.



City BBQ “Fun Raiser” – April 28



On April 28, we invite you to join us at City BBQ in Beaver Creek for a fundraising event supporting our band program. Enjoy a meal and a time of fellowship while helping our young musicians continue to grow.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the transforming work of the Gospel through Lutheran education.

In His Service,

Mr. Ferguson

Our 8th grade students have had such a special year at Bethlehem Lutheran School! As we head into the final quarter, there's definitely a bittersweet feeling in the air. This class has been together for a long time (many since preschool!) and it has been such a joy to watch them grow into the kind, capable, and faith-filled leaders they are today. We've been soaking up their final year together... and maybe pretending it's not almost time to say goodbye.

This year has been full of learning (and a lot of fun along the way!). In ELA, students read *The Outsiders* and *Anne of Green Gables*, and those stories sparked some really thoughtful conversations and connections. During Read Across America Week, we had a flashlight reading day where students curled up with a good book. This year, I challenged them to find *one book* they truly loved. I'm happy to report that many of them did! Our classroom library has been very well-used. At this point, some books have been read so many times they deserve their own graduation ceremony too.

In History, we brought learning to life in some pretty creative ways. Students created an Ancient Civilizations Museum, designing exhibits and artifacts to teach others about their chosen culture. They also designed their own historical board games, which were tested out by younger students. One of the biggest hits of the year was a role-playing strategy game based on Sparta and Athens... We now have quite a few students walking around with 20-sided dice in their lockers!

Christmas was another highlight of the year. Our 8th graders worked together to write and perform an original program, *The North Star Express*, alongside Mrs. Ellington. They developed the story, created the characters, and all took part in bringing it to life on stage. Even with a few unexpected snow days, we still found ways to celebrate together with some festive classroom fun. They also took home the win in our Christmas door decorating contest with a gingerbread house theme...complete with tiny hidden crosses and little reminders of Jesus at the center of it all.

Outside the classroom, these students have really stepped into leadership roles. They partnered with our 1st graders as reading buddies, helping build confidence and friendships across grade levels. They hosted a Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser to support their class trip to the Ark Encounter in Kentucky this May, where they'll continue learning more about God's story. In Health class, they wrapped up a unit on etiquette and hospitality with a special formal dinner, complete with dressing up and practicing what it means to be a thoughtful guest and host.

We are so proud of their accomplishments. This was Bethlehem's first year participating in Power of the Pen at the middle school level, and our 8th graders rose to the occasion by sending two writers to regionals! As a class, they also earned the Pastor's Christian Chicken Award for having the highest cumulative GPA in Catechism...proving that hard work, faith, and maybe a little healthy competition go a long way.

Through it all, what stands out most is who they are becoming. It has been a privilege to walk alongside them this year—celebrating their successes, encouraging them through challenges, and watching their faith continue to grow. As we prepare to send off this incredible group of students, we do so with so much pride (and just a few tears). We pray that the light of Christ continues to guide them, strengthen them, and shine through them as they begin this next chapter.



Helping Hands Needed for the Fellowship Hall Refresh!

Our Fellowship Hall is ready for a little love, and we're gathering a team of people with practical skills to help bring new life to the space. If you're comfortable with **removing wallpaper, mudding or patching walls**, or **painting**, we would be grateful for your time and talent.

Whether you're a seasoned DIY-er or someone who simply enjoys rolling up your sleeves for a good project, your help will make a real difference. This is a wonderful way to serve, connect, and contribute to a space our whole church family uses and enjoys.

If you're willing to lend a hand—or want to learn more—please reach out to Terri Fry. You can contact her by text 937 475-0544. Thank you for helping us care for our church home.

Work will begin on **Monday, April 6 at 8:00 am and end on Sunday, April 12.**

Next opportunity will be Saturday, May 23 to Saturday, May 30 and again on Saturday, June 6 to Sunday July 13.



SHOWERED with Blessings



COME AND CELEBRATE



Baby Girl
Green



Baby Boy
Johnson



Baby Girl
Miller

APRIL

SUNDAY

12

1:00PM

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
RSVP TO MAGGIE NELSON OR ALISON WITTE

JOHNSONS WILL BE MOVING SOON. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO
GIVE A GIFT, GIFT CARDS ARE APPRECIATED.



April Birthdays

Betty Marlette.....	1
Chad Hollingsworth	13
Maggie Nelson	14
Kathy Fiene	22
Paul Thibeault	
Tom Hitzeman	24
Christian Huffman	
Jane Jones	
Brett Fiepke.....	25
Phil Maffett	
Sue Saunders	
Benjamin Ausserer	26
April Sadowski	27
Johnathan Tressler	
Jennifer Ramsey	29

April Anniversaries

Jim & Kathy Fiene	3
Pastor & Edna England.....	6
Dalton & Kyla Miller	27



Baptismal Birthdays

Kathy Brockman	1
Meghann Martinek	
Art Casci	9
Chris Nelson	14
Elaine Schultz	17
Pat Horn	23
Jodi Crosby	26

- Larry Barnhard
- Nancy Beaty
- Norma Dupre
- Jonathan Fiene
- Erma Haggerty
- Nesta Harris
- Louise Hellickson
- Helga Hemphill
- Eileen Hitzeman



- Doris Humphreys
- Gene Ninnemann
- Jean Robinson
- Marilyn Scheu
- Elaine Schultz
- Robyn Shipman
- Pastor & Lynda Viken
- Sue Williamson
- Alison Witte
- Gladys Zink



The Men's Bible Study will meet on Saturday, April 25th at 9 am in the Fellowship Hall. They will be starting a series on evangelism. All men are welcome to attend. Feel free to bring breakfast/snacks. Please see Dalton Miller with questions or comments.



The LWML will again be adopting a Ft. Wayne Seminary—and in this case it will be our own Jacob Whitt. He will begin his studies this year. We support a seminarian with \$60 per month and with gift cards on various special days. The members of the congregation are welcome to help with this. Please make your check out to LWML and put adopt a seminarian in the memo line.

The Bethlehem STAR

April 2026

Bethlehem Lutheran Church & School
1240 S. Maple Avenue, Fairborn, OH 45324
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Rev. Keith F. Witte, Pastor



The Lord is Risen!

Sunday, April 5
8 & 10:45 am
Divine Services

Followed by breakfast prepared and served by LIFE

Church Office

Phone: (937) 878-0651
FAX: (937) 878-4794
Email: bethlehem7@aol.com
Web Page—www.Bethlehem7.org

School Office

Phone: (937) 878-7050
Email: bethlehemschool@aol.com
Web Page—www.mybethlehemschool.com
Mr. Scott Ferguson, Principal
Mrs. Michelle Zulfer, Vice Principal

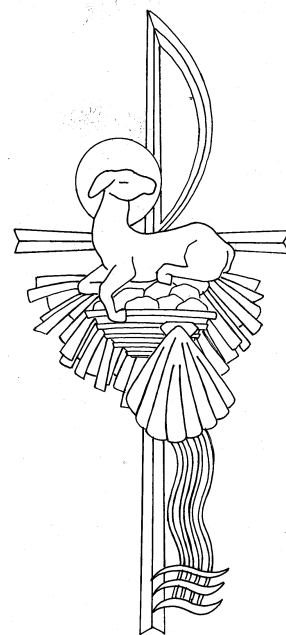
Sunday

Worship Services at 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.
Online: churchstreamer.org (live at 8 am service, previously recorded services under "Live" tab)
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

May Star deadline: Sunday, April 19th.



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