



The Bethel Newsletter

January 2018

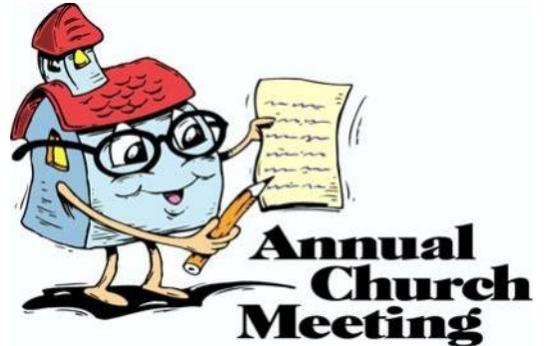
Porter, Minnesota

Communing
TOGETHER



Holy Communion:

Bethel-January 7 & 14
Hemnes-January 7 & 14



January 28, 2018

Congregational Pot-luck after worship

Meeting starts around 12:15 pm.

Mark your calendars now!



The Feast of Epiphany is on January 7th this year.

The Baptism of Our Lord is on January 14th.



Be sure to join us for these Holy Days!

And we will be transforming past Paschal candles into new candles on January 21st!

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Bethel Lutheran Church is affiliated with the South-west Synod of Minnesota of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

God's Work. Our Hands.

Bethel Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 126
2429 County Hwy 16
Porter, MN 56280

Telephone: (507) 296-4658

Office Hours at the Church:
1st, 2nd & 4th Tues—9:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m.
3rd Wed—9:30a.m.-12:00 p.m.

E-mail address: bethellutheran@frontier.com
Website: bethelofporter.com

Pastor Rev. Ellen Munter
296-4558 (home) 507-828-1000 (cell)
Email: pastormunter@gmail.com

Your Church Officers

President	Lance Moeller	296-4634
Vice President	Mike Knutson	507-829-2767
Treasurer	Virginia Thomsen	223-7918
Financial Sec.	Josh Sumption	296-4497
Secretary	Sue Alley	507-530-1628

Deacons

Anna Kamrath, Chair	507-530-5558
Martha Melrose	296-4515
Craig Petersen	296-4483
Terry Dybsetter	296-4401
Sara Wollum	223-5844

Trustees

Jerome Bruns, Chair	296-4645
Dawn Gawerecki	224-2267
Roger Longhenry	296-4422
Bob Merritt Jr	296-4436
Shawn Jackson	296-4699

Board of Education

Tracy Wente, Chair	296-4623
Anna Noyes	296-4477
Carmon Mamer	223-7751
Darcy Bruns	223-7395
Megan Syltie	296-4660

Custodian

Lou Knutson	296-4489
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January Birthdays

- 3rd Brandon Moeller, Janet Hulzebos,
Brady Carstens
- 4th Mervyn Anderson
- 5th Thomas Gawerecki, Jeff Wilke,
Amber Moeller
- 6th Pearl Knutson, Rose Anderson,
Heather Hurt
- 9th Todd Blumeyer
- 10th Daniel Anderson
- 11th McKenzie Evjen, Hailey Evjen,
- 12th Jerome Bruns, Jim Moeller
- 15th Rich Syltie
- 16th Mark Anderson
- 21st Cora Meier
- 22nd Spencer Moeller, Tulane Alexander
- 24th Ellie Dybsetter
- 25th John Appelen, Robyn Hulzebos, Amy Drietz
- 27th Nicole Kamrath, Chance Negen

If you have any corrections or additions,
please contact the church office at 296-4658, or
email: bethellutheran@frontier.com. If your name
does not appear in the month of your birthday, it
means we don't have your birth date. Thanks!



Starlight, star bright, first star I see tonight.

*Wish I may, in your sight,
love the Lord with all my might.*

Not quite what you were expecting, I bet. And old, familiar poem with a surprise ending. Very appropriate for Epiphany, a season of surprises. And a season of stars.

Minister's
Musings

We all know about that one, special star that led the magi to find Jesus. We've heard the story. But if this were the first time you were hearing these stories, experiencing the sweep of the Church year starting in Advent, this appearance of these strangers at the home of Jesus would, I think, be a surprise. Until now, everything about this Child, this One who will be King, Who has come to set us free, has not really been about "us". It's been about the Jewish people.

The scripture is at pains to tell us that Jesus was born to a Jewish mother, lived in a Jewish household, was raised by a Jewish foster father, observed the Jewish rites in the Temple, was foreseen and then honored by the Jewish prophets and priests. If this was the first time you were hearing this story, your logical conclusion would probably be that the "us" the Bible speaks of is the Jewish nation. The Chosen people. But when has God ever bowed to our human logic?

Instead, we find these men – emphatically **not** of the Chosen people – who travel over 900 miles on camels to find this Child. This Child Who has, as of yet, not spoken a word. Not performed any miracles. Not published any scholarly papers. And yet here they are, tired, dusty, far from home, kneeling in front of Him offering gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Why did they come? We don't really know. But clearly something called to them when they saw the star. Something compelled them to find Him Whom it marked. What else could that something be but God the Father? God, whose plan for the salvation of the entire world, not just the Jewish nation, is really starting to pick up steam now. Jesus has been born – the Word of God, the Love of God, the Mercy and Forgiveness of God incarnate in the flesh. The One who will save not just His people, but all the children of God, has arrived and before He can do anything impressive, the world has come looking for Him.

This is the surprise of Epiphany. The incredible scope of God's plan seen first not in a miracle of Jesus' doing, but one of the Father's. Later, when Jesus is grown and ministering to the people, we will see many examples of Him carrying out this plan. Inviting non-Jews to eat with Him. Healing them, calling them to follow. He will confront His own people with their outdated notion that they are the only ones God the Father loves. And they will not be pleased. Not pleased at all. Eventually, they will be so displeased that they will put Him to death – His own people doing this, not outsiders.

But we are not quite there, yet. In this season of stars and kings and camels, may we renew our desire to love the Lord with all our might. And do more than just wish for all people to know the joy we have found in Jesus the Savior – may we follow the prompting of God the Father to reach out to those who have not heard the story of the child in the manger who grew to be the King on the Cross. May the Holy Spirit move us and work through us to seek out those who are searching diligently for **something** and bring them to the only true source of peace, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

*Star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!*

In Christ,

Pastor Munter



The Church

Council and Board

reports for December 19, 2017

Trustees

The following discussion/decisions were made;

The Trustees discussed and accepted the Bills for December.

The Trustees wish to thank those that did extra work around the church property mowing and trimming cemetery, spraying weeds, shoveling snow, trimming bushes and anything else to make our church property look great.

Approved to pay the bills.

Attending were: *Bob Merritt, Shawn Jackson, Roger Longhenry, & Jerome Bruns*

Deacons

- Deacon of the Month: Terry Dybsetter
- Food Shelf: Canby
- Communion Dates for both Hemnes and Bethel will be January 7 & 14, 2018

Members Present: Terry, Martha, Anna, Craig & Sara.

Board of Education

The Christmas Program was very successful

Submitted by: Carmon Mamer



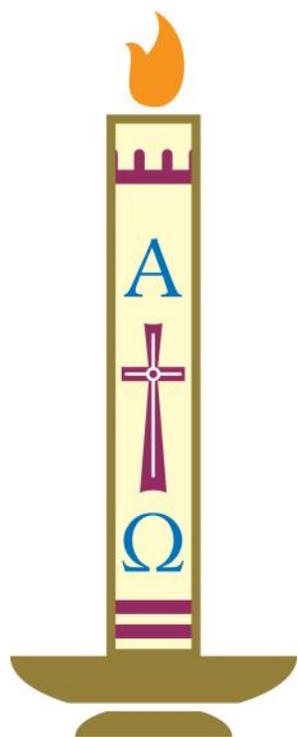
January 28th , 2018

Approximately 12:15 pm
 Congregational Potluck following worship
 business meeting to follow.

*Join with your Bethel family reviewing 2017
 making decisions regarding Bethel in 2018
 and planning our future.*



Come and Make a Candle!



Every year we bless a new Paschal Candle for Easter. And every year, the old Paschal candle still has life left in it. So this year, we will be transforming past Paschal candles into new ones. Candles that can be used for devotional time, mealtime, remembrances of baptism, birthday or anniversary celebrations. Any time a special candle is needed. Then, on February 4th, we will celebrate Candlemass and bless all the candles used in worship, as well as these candles made by you.

On January 21st (time to be determined by when the Vikings are playing!) come to the Fellowship Hall and make a candle. We will provide the wax, wicks and some molds. If you have a container you would like to use, bring it along!



Epiphany In Eastern and Western Christianity

By Rev. George Dion. Dragas Ph.D., D.D.

On the 6th of January Eastern Orthodox and Western Christians celebrate the great Feast of Epiphany (Western) or Theophany (Eastern). This Feast [is] a celebration that goes right back to Christian beginnings and opens up the meaning of the Christian faith and tradition.

Epiphany (from the Greek *epiphaneia*) means “manifestation from above,” that is, “divine revelation.” The Christian feast of the Epiphany primarily entails the manifestation of God in Christ, Christ being manifested as the Son of God and God as the Trinity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.



The Eastern Epiphany celebrates the Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan by John the Baptist or “Forerunner” (in Greek *Prodromos*) as the event of the manifestation of Christ as the Son of God and its corollary, the manifestation of God in Trinity, and also as the event that marks the beginning of Christ’s saving mission. This is particularly revealed in the service of the Great Sanctification of the Waters (*Megas Agiasmos*), which is reminiscent of Christ’s Baptism and constitutes a conspicuous feature of the Eastern celebration.

In the Christian East, Epiphany is the oldest Feast of the Lord next to Pascha (Easter), and was always celebrated on the 6th of January. The first reference to Epiphany is found in Clement of Alexandria at the end of the second century AD. If Pascha marked the climax of the saving work of Christ, Epiphany marked the disclosure of the divine person of Christ who opened up the mystery of God and initiated the process of [our] salvation. Baptism joins human beings to Christ, granting them remission of sins and eternal life through the sanctifying grace of God. The Holy Water blessed at Epiphany is a great blessing that is much treasured by the Orthodox who use it to renew (re-consecrate) themselves and their physical environment.

The Western Epiphany celebrates the veneration of the newborn Christ by the wise Oriental Magi as the event that marks the manifestation of the divinity of Christ to the “nations.” Especially since medieval times, Western Christianity developed an elaborate tradition around these Oriental figures – fixing their number to three and identifying them with three kings, called Melchior, Gaspar (ed. or Caspar) and Balthasar.



The origins of the Feast of the Epiphany in the West are rather obscure. There is a consensus that Epiphany was first introduced in the Western Church from the East in the fourth century about the same time as the new Feast of Christmas took root in the Roman Liturgy, commemorating at first the Birth and the Baptism of Christ. It came to be primarily associated with the visit of the wise Magi to Bethlehem, especially after the establishment of the Feast of Christmas on the 25th of December.

What is the meaning of Epiphany for the Western Church? It is primarily the manifestation of the divine Savior Christ to the gentiles; but it is also the acknowledgment of Christ by the gentiles. This double meaning is expressed by the way the Western Church interpreted the offering of gold, frankincense and myrrh, by the wise Magi. On the one hand it saw these gifts as symbols of the three aspects of Christ’s life, his being king, priest and prophet. On the other hand it re-enacted the offering in various ways by instituting appropriate acts of offering, to the poor, to the church and to the sick.

There is no doubt that both Eastern and Western traditions of Epiphany share a common message: the manifestation of the divine identity and saving work of Christ. The difference lies in ethos and emphasis. The Eastern tradition seems to be more attuned to the dramatic and theophanic aspect of Christ’s ministry, whereas the Western tradition seems to be seeking to follow the historical Jesus as he unfolds his message through his deeds and words. The one is more vertical and the other more horizontal. Combining the two could only be a source of enrichment.

Thank you — Thank you — -Thank you

The Board of Trustees wish to thank those individuals that did extra work around the church property including mowing and trimming the cemetery, spraying weeds, shoveling snow, trimming bushes and anything else to make our church property look great.



**EVERYDAY
REFORMERS**

2018 Equipping

Congregations Day

Saturday, February 10, 2018

8:30 am — 3:30 pm

Vinje Lutheran and Bethel Lutheran Churches, Willmar, MN

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton : Keynote speaker

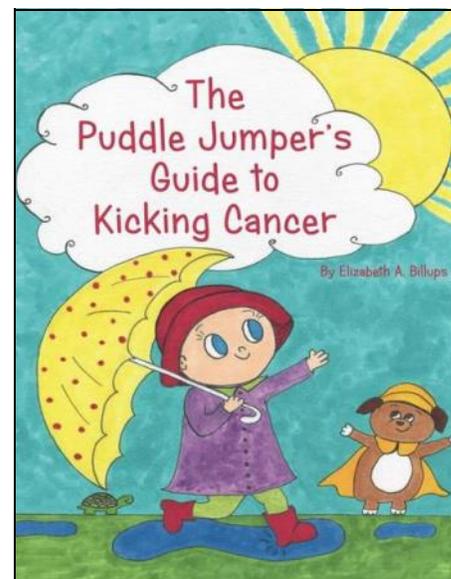
Check out this website for more info:

<https://swmnelca.org/event/equipping-congregations-day/>

New in the church Library

The Puddle Jumper's Guide to Kicking Cancer is a children's book that deals with the tough subject of children with cancer. This book is written in the voice of Gracie (Billups) who was diagnosed with Leukemia at 9 years old. Gracie is the daughter of Val and Elizabeth (Appelen) Billups. (She's the Grace we've been praying for!)

This is a true story about a spunky puddle jumper who gives an honest, hopeful and sometimes funny look at "kicking" cancer.



Monthly Financial Update

General: \$3,247.69 (\$55.00 received through Simply Giving)

Includes: \$1,467.29 from Hemnes Lutheran Church.
\$250.00 for funeral serving. \$20.40 from greeting card sales.

Savings: \$350.00

Includes: \$30.00 in memory of Herman Esping (\$20.00 undesignated and \$10.00 for Faith Chests). \$10.00 in memory of Walter Syltie for Cemetery. \$300.00 to coffee fund. \$10.00 faith chest offering.



An important note regarding the year end revenue to budgeted expenses comparison. In December, \$5,000 was received as pre-payment of 2018 offerings. This receipt leaves a shortfall of \$1,083.05 for our 2017 revenues.

Year to Date Actual Revenue and Budgeted Expenses Comparison

This report is based on budgeted expenses only, divided evenly for each month of the calendar year. The actual expenses each month may be more or less than was budgeted. This analysis is to be used as a guideline only and not a full representation of the full financial health of Bethel Lutheran Church.

This report does not include revenues or expenses regarding the Hemnes Lutheran Church portion of the joint parish budget.

	Year to Date Revenue	Year to Date Budgeted Expense	Year to Date Difference: shortfalls shown as negative numbers	Cash Reserves Expended	Cash Reserves Repaid
January	\$6,814.40	\$8,030.63	-\$1,216.23		
February	\$12,864.65	\$16,061.25	-\$3,196.60		
March	\$21,480.01	\$24,091.88	-\$2,611.87		
April	\$43,722.57	\$32,122.50	\$11,600.07		
May	\$48,075.57	\$40,153.13	\$7,922.44		
June	\$52,451.57	\$48,183.75	\$4,267.82		
July	\$57,778.22	\$56,214.38	\$1,563.84		
August	\$63,159.79	\$64,245.00	-\$1,085.21		
September	\$68,855.79	\$72,275.63	-\$3,419.84		
October	\$75,200.79	\$80,306.25	-\$5,105.46		
November	\$84,817.85	\$88,336.88	-\$3,519.03		
December	\$100,284.45	\$96,367.50	\$3,916.95		

Bethel Workgroup Schedule



Altar Workers for Sundays in November

Darcy Bruns and Bonnie Merritt

Altar Workers for Sundays in December

Carmon Mamer & Lou Knutson

Group #4

**Please note: The first person or couple on the list are chair for the next funeral.*

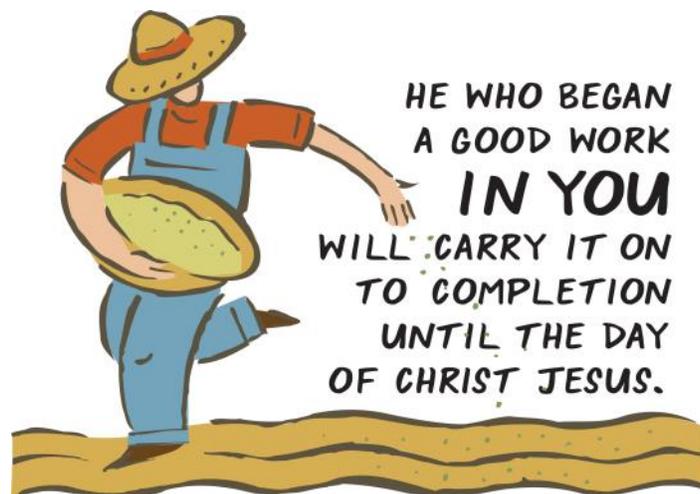
Deanna and Lance Moeller	296-4634
Gail and Marlo Sumption	296-4609
Barb Pronk	296-4549
Norma and Ralph Dovre	223-7771
Terry and Dan Dybsetter	296-4401
Anna and Brad Noyes	296-4477
Phyllis and Harvey Melrose	223-5512
Dawn and Tom Gawerecki	224-2267 Or 507-828-6087
	Or 507-828-6099
Joy and Randy Schmidt	224-2286
Hattie and Jim VanDerostyne	296-4563
David Dybsetter	296-4648
Chad Moeller	507-828-3536
Danny VanDerostyne	



Epiphany Wonder

[On Epiphany] the Magi gaze in deep wonder at what they see: heaven on earth, earth in heaven, humanity in God, God in humanity, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed in a tiny body. As they look ... their symbolic gifts bear witness: incense for God, gold for a king, myrrh for one who is to die.

—Peter Chrysologus (5th century)



HE WHO BEGAN
A GOOD WORK
IN YOU
WILL CARRY IT ON
TO COMPLETION
UNTIL THE DAY
OF CHRIST JESUS.

PHILIPPIANS 1:6, NIV

Worship Schedule

Hemnes:

8:30 am Sunday Morning

Bethel:

10:00 am Sunday Morning Worship

11:00 am Coffee Fellowship

Communion Worship:

Bethel– January 7 & 14

Hemnes – January 7 & 14

Pastor’s Office Hours:

9:30 am—12:00 pm Tues.

9:30 am—12:00 pm Wed. January 17th

Confirmation:

6:15 pm Wednesday

January 2018

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



Coming Events

- Jan 1 New Years Day
- Jan 6 Epiphany of Our Lord
- Jan 7 Baptism of Our Lord
- Jan 14 2:00 pm 2017 Memorial Service: St. Peter’s
- Jan 15 7:30 pm Boards and Council
- Jan 16 9:00 am Prairie Conference
- Jan 18 10:15 am Sylvan Worship
- Jan 25 2:30 pm Minneota Manor
- Jan 28 11:15 am Congregational Potluck
12:15 pm Annual Meeting—Bethel



January 7 Epiphany of Our Lord	January 14 Baptism of Our Lord	January 21 2 Epiphany	January 28 3 Epiphany
Isaiah 60:1-6 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12	Genesis 1:1-5 Psalm 29 Acts 19:1-7 Mark 1:4-11	Jonah 3:1-5, 10 Psalm 62:5-12 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 Mark 1:14-20	Deuteronomy 18:15-20 Psalm 111 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

P.O Box 126

2429 Co. Hwy. 16

Porter, MN 56280

Bethel Lutheran Newsletter
January, 2018



Sunday School: 9:00 am
Worship: 10:00 am