



The

# Parish Visitor

A Publication of Bethlehem Lutheran Church • Askov, Minnesota

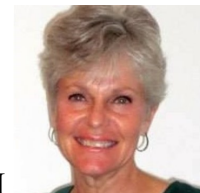
January 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## A Message From Our SAM

Celebrate all 12 days!

Most people think December 25 is it... no it is not.. We get 12 days! The 25 is just the start. The Magi come 12 days later to celebrate Jesus – we get to celebrate along with them until January 6. Take a breath, relax and celebrate! This year I wanted to share our Bishop’s Christmas greeting with you..... Enjoy reading and pondering – Blessings to you this time of Jesus’ Birth

– Clara Edin SAM



### Synod Christmas Letter from Bishop Odgren 2023

I told the synod staff last week that I’m having a hard time finding the “Merry” in Christmas or the “Joy” in Joy to the World this season. The emotional weight of the war in Palestine, especially Gaza, is difficult. The January trip planned by the ELCA with four synods traveling together to visit our companions in India has been postponed because of safety concerns for Christians in an unstable political environment. There seems to be more anger and lashing out between people and in public forums. From hurting bodies and souls to hurting relationships and communities, it’s clear that things are not as they should be. Some of us live with varying degrees of physical pain or a new diagnosis, and others of us harbor the emotional pain of loneliness, shame, and guilt. Looking at our culture more broadly, we see the harm of our social divisions and the unyielding reality and impact of injustice and inequity.

For me, this Christmas, plain and simple, seems *hard*. And yet, I know that it is exactly into this same difficult, divisive, uncertain, unfriendly, and politically unstable world that God became incarnate in human form as a baby – the Christ child. A friend reminded me of a poem that was written by the French writer, Madeleine L’Engle.

#### “Into the Darkest Hour”

It was a time like this, war & tumult of war, a horror in the air.  
 Hungry yawned the abyss – and yet there came the star and the child most wonderfully there.  
 It was a time like this of fear & lust for power, license & greed and blight –  
 and yet the Prince of bliss came into the darkest hour in quiet & silent light.  
 And in a time like this how celebrate his birth when all things fall apart?  
 Ah! Wonderful it is with no room on the earth the stable is our heart.

*The stable is our heart.* What a good reminder of Immanuel – God with us. Not just coming close, but *with us, in us, in our very hearts.* Ah – just what I need to hear over and over again, especially this year. In the midst of what can sometimes feel like a heavy and challenging world, it is reassuring to be reminded of the promise of hope and renewal that God gifts the world in Christ Jesus.

-Bishop Amy Odgren



# January Worship Schedule

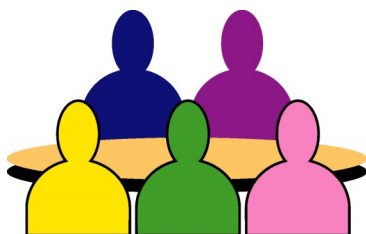
January 7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Worship	Eleanor Eskuri	Worship 10 am
January 14 <sup>th</sup> Worship with Holy Communion	Clara Edin SAM	Worship 10 am
January 21 <sup>st</sup> Sunday Worship	Al Overland	Worship 10 am
January 28 <sup>th</sup> Worship with Holy Communion	Clara Edin SAM	Worship 10 am

## IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

Please include the following people in your daily prayers:

Jan, Lois, Mike, Deb, Jo, Jeff, Bob, Daniel, Iver, Rita, Chardae, Lynda, Chase, McCoy, Ron, Gavin, Jerry, Rod, Kris, Ron, Jenna, Loretta, Roy, Jeanine, and their families.

If you would like to add someone to the weekly prayer list, please email the church office at [blcaskov@gmail.com](mailto:blcaskov@gmail.com) or let Clara know.



### COUNCIL MEETING

December 13, 2023  
Unapproved Minutes

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Yvette Maloney, Haley Loew, Carolyn Steele, Linda Jensen, Clara Edin SAM and Sandra Pavelka.

Yvette called the meeting to order. Clara SAM gave devotion.

**ACCEPT MINUTES OF NOVEMBER COUNCIL MEETING:** Motion by Haley to accept minutes, Linda second, motion carried.

**NOVEMBER TREASURER'S REPORT:** Reviewed.

**PASTOR'S REPORT:** Clara submitted her pastoral care for the past month.

**MINISTRY TEAMS:**

- Property—Haley reported all LED lighting is complete. Minnesota Power will issue a rebate in 2024.
- Family Ministry—Sandra reported 4 BLC members participated in Emmanuel's Live Nativity on December 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Circle of Faith—Carolyn reported the Craft and bake sale proceeds totaled \$1,907.00. They will be giving out gift cards for Christmas.
- Music & Worship—Linda reports she has new driplless candles for the candelabras.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Cooperative Ministry—Yvette reported that the

guidelines for the cooperative have changed since it was first presented to us. We would need to contribute 19% of our total giving to the cooperative pastor, and SAM's will only be utilized as Sunday pulpit supply. Based on this new information Yvette made a motion to *not* sign the Covenant of Cooperative, second by Carolyn, motion carried.

- SAM contract—Clara's contract was signed by the Bishop, and a copy is available in the office.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Annual congregational meeting—scheduled for Sunday, February 4, 2024.
- Council meetings during Lent—will be changed to February 13<sup>th</sup> and

March 12, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

- Christmas gifts—Motion to purchase gift cards from Askov Deep Rock for Clara Edin SAM, Heidi Moon, Marilyn Krogh, as well as Margaret Christensen and Arla Budd, made by Carolyn, second by Sandra, motion carried.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Linda will pick up gift cards from Deep Rock.

Motion to adjourn by Sandra, second by Linda, meeting adjourned.

Next council meeting, Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*-Sandra Pavelka*  
*Secretary*



If you'd like to receive your Parish Visitor by mail, please email the church office at [blcaskov@gmail.com](mailto:blcaskov@gmail.com)

Newsletters will continue to be available on-line at [www.blcaskov.com/newsletter](http://www.blcaskov.com/newsletter)

### November Treasurer's Report Summary:

**Month:** We are **896.25** ahead in income vs. expenses for the month of November 2023; and **840.89** under our projected budget for the month of November 2023. **Year-to-Date Totals:** We are **3,806.57** behind in income vs. expenses for the year **2023**; and **4,785.92** under our projected budget for the year **2023**.



Circle of Faith (COF) met December 10, 2023. The members in attendance were Tracy Zinter, Cookie Nielsen, Jo Foss, Shawn Jansen, Carolyn Steele, and Mary Johnson. Tracy called the meeting to order

**Devotion:** Jo's devotion: Christmas is a mysterious and magical time. Each member was given an en-

velope to open in a quiet time to reflect what God reveals to us.

**Reports:** Secretary minutes from November meeting were reviewed. Motion to accept the minutes made by Cookie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Carolyn, motion carried.

**Treasurer's report:**  
 Checking \$2,846.42  
 Savings \$1,181.28  
 Dedicated account \$1,066.50

**Old business:** A motion made by Cookie to accept the amendment to delete a motion made at November meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Carolyn, motion carried.

**Community meal:** will be January 24, 2023.

**Card mailing:** TBD

**New Business:** Discussion on dispersing funds from Decembe craft/bake sale. Tracy made a motion to give \$100 to an anonymous recipient, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cookie, motion carried. Shawn made a motion to give \$100 to a family to help cover medical expenses for their son, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mary, motion carried. Shawn made a motion to give \$100 to a family for a health crisis, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mary, motion carried. Motion made by Cookie to give 31 \$30 gift certificates from Chris's for Sand-

stone and Bruno food shelves, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jo, motion carried. Cookie will distribute the certificates. Tabled for the next meeting: Discussion regarding becoming part of W/ELCA and a Bible study. Review the last 5 years of community meals. COF will have a holiday celebration at January's meeting.

Motion made to adjourn by Cookie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Shawn, meeting adjourned with The Lord's Prayer.

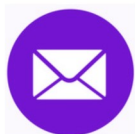
Next meeting January 13, 2024 at 10:00 am.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
 -Mary Johnson,  
 Secretary

## DID YOU KNOW BLC HAS 4 WAYS TO GIVE?



**IN PERSON**



**BY MAIL**



**ON-LINE**



**AUTOMATIC**

### ON-LINE GIVING

**• WHAT IS ON-LINE GIVING?**

On-line giving is a way for our church to receive offerings via the internet through our website donation page.

**• WHY IS ON-LINE GIVING IMPORTANT?**

On-line giving allows you to give quickly, easily, and securely. We are able to collect donations from all across the country!

**• HOW DOES ON-LINE GIVING HELP?**

Nearly everyone has access to the internet in one way or another. With on-line giving, we can meet our givers where they are!

Visit: <http://www.blcaskov.com/online-giving/> to start!

**ALSO AVAILABLE...**

### ACH GIVING

**• WHAT IS ACH GIVING?**

ACH or EFT giving is a way for our church to receive offerings by automatic electronic transfers from your checking or savings account.

**• WHY IS ACH GIVING IMPORTANT?**

ACH or EFT giving fosters good stewardship. It also improves accuracy and enhances security for our givers!

**• HOW DOES ACH GIVING HELP?**

Members can setup recurring donations that promote consistent, regular giving (and ACH/EFT giving can be paused or stopped on request)

Contact the church office at 320-838-3191 to learn more!



The Circle of Faith sends greeting cards as one of our outreach missions to BLC and community members. The cards provide a personal and caring contact to the recipients from BLC. We are in current need of sympathy, thinking of you, get well, and blank greeting cards. A Basket for card donations will be in the coffee area. COF maintains a list of regular recipients but we rely on BLC members to keep us updated on contact or card need information. A sign up information gathering sheet will be next to the basket, so please add any names to this list if you know of a need. Thank you for your help.





- Jamie Fogt—3<sup>rd</sup>
- Olivia Moon—3<sup>rd</sup>
- Mike Petersen—4<sup>th</sup>
- DJ Zinter—13<sup>th</sup>
- Jake Klocke—14<sup>th</sup>
- Kevin Klocke—14<sup>th</sup>
- Shawn Jansen—22<sup>nd</sup>
- Jo Foss—23<sup>rd</sup>
- Denny Jensen—29<sup>th</sup>
- Betty Peterson—29<sup>th</sup>
- Denise Zeitz—29<sup>th</sup>
- Tracy Zinter—29<sup>th</sup>
- Connie Ecklund—30<sup>th</sup>
- Kirsten Tacheny—30<sup>th</sup>
- Hayden Loew—31<sup>st</sup>



Roger & Cindy  
Jensen—January 23<sup>rd</sup>

**All annual reports are due in the church office (deadline was December 28<sup>th</sup>)**

**Each Ministry Team and Committee is required to submit an annual report to the congregation for inclusion in our Annual Report**

**(Reports should be typed or emailed to the office in MS Word or RTF format to [blcaskov@gmail.com](mailto:blcaskov@gmail.com), please DO NOT submit reports in PDF format)**

# Photo Ops!



**"Santa" delivers our sanctuary tree!**



**Ginger always makes the altar beautiful!**



**Roger places the angel "on high"!**



**BLC members participated in the Live Nativity at Emmanuel Dell Grove**

## LOST & FOUND

A black jacket was accidentally taken after Don Petersen's funeral—the person who's jacket it is would very much like it returned.

"Your" jacket is still hanging in the church to be reclaimed (wooden cross in the pocket)

*It was the season!*