

December Bell Echoes

Bethesda Lutheran Church



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

9:00am Traditional Worship Service
10:00am Sunday School
10:30am Contemporary Worship Service

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Saturday, December 2nd

9:30am Putting Up the Lights

Monday, December 3rd, 11th and 18th

6:30pm Advent Bible Study

Tuesday, December 5th

6:00pm Women's Advent Program

Saturday, December 9th

10:00am Sunday School Christmas Program Practice

Friday, December 15th

6:30pm Intergenerational Movie Night

Sunday, December 17th

10:30am Worship Service—SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Sunday, December 24th (CHRISTMAS EVE)

9:00am Worship Service (ONE SERVICE ONLY)

4:30pm Family Worship Service

10:30pm Candlelight Worship Service

December Bell Echoes Newsletter Article

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

I love the Advent/Christmas season. I love everything about it. Yes, even the secular parts. When the daylight is short and the deep dark of night is long I like that the bright colored lights illuminate my way home. I enjoy the hunt for the perfect gifts for my family and friends and find myself humming along with the familiar holiday songs blasting from the stores speakers. When I hear that tinkling Salvation Army bell my heart is filled with hope. I look forward to the smells and tastes of Christmas - pine needles, cinnamon, hot apple cider, eggnog, Christmas cookies and so much more. I treasure our family traditions and appreciate others family traditions. And - who can possibly remain solemn watching children act out the Christmas story? All of these things are good and bring me great pleasure but they pale in comparison with the reason for doing all these things.

I love the Advent /Christmas season because it is the time of year we remember and celebrate the magnificent surprise; the surprise that one day God stepped into our world on our terms. God becoming flesh and blood; a baby Jesus born in Bethlehem, a child raised in Nazareth, a man crucified in Jerusalem. I am not sure I will ever get over the fact that God, The Creator of all there is, the Almighty the Everlasting became one of us "*The Word became flesh and lived among us*".

God is still full of surprises and is still showing up in unexpected ways. The Advent/Christmas season can be a time for exploring where God may be found now. So often we get a glimpse of God and then a few days later forget all about it. If you choose here is an Advent activity to help you remember how God interacts with you.

Find a shoe box or small box and wrap it in Christmas paper. Cut a slit in the top big enough for folded pieces of paper. Keep the box in a place that is accessible and visible. When you have a God sighting, write it down and put it in the box.

Examples:

- A. You are walking and it feels as if God is right next to you. Write that down date it and drop it in the box.
- B. You read your daily devotion and it speaks right to a particular situation you are going through. Write that on a piece a paper and drop it in the box.
- C. A conversation with a friend helped you with something that you had gone to God for in prayer.
- D. You see something and it reminds you of God's love for you.

These are just a few examples it will be fun to discover how God surprises you throughout this Season. Sometime in January open the box and read all the notes that show you how God surprised you with His presence during Advent and Christmas.

Have a blessed and surprising Advent/Christmas season, *Pastor Maggie*

Message from the Interim Pastor

Thank you, members and friends of Bethesda, for your generous send-off for me on November 12th. The richly decorated chocolate cake served in the fellowship time between the services was delicious. I was given scores of cards, and I enjoyed reading the notes written to me inside them. You also gave me a very generous monetary gift, and in a few cases gift cards. Finally, I was pleased to receive the devotional book Jesus Calling from which the Tuesday morning prayer group has been reading. I deeply appreciate your thoughtfulness and affection expressed that Sunday.

Muchas gracias!

Pastor Ralph Baumgartner

Advent Adventure Group

Advent is a time of anticipation. So what is it that we are anticipating, looking for? We are not looking for Jesus to come to us as a baby in a manger. That already happened over 2000 years ago. However in the remembering of God coming into the world as a baby named Jesus we acknowledge and celebrate the mystery of God made flesh and dwelling among us. So what does that mean for us in this time and place? Come join us on Monday evenings to explore and experience what the story of Jesus coming means for us now.

When: Mondays December 4, 11 and 18 from 6:30 -8:00 pm.

Where: Bethesda in the Lounge

What: Exploring the Christmas Scriptures, storytelling, hands on prayer experiences and just maybe a little desert!



Bethesda Missions

ILAG Guatemalan Mission
Neighbor's Inc.
Feed My Starving Children
Mission Trip Scholarship Fund

Mission Focus for December **Giving to Others**

The Giving Tree

Please stop by The Giving Tree in the narthex to choose an ornament tag (or 2 or 3) which will state a way you could give a specific gift to our missions for this Christmas season. The Giving Tree will be filled with mission gift ideas for Bethesda's community and global mission projects. (Neighbor's Inc, FMSC, ILAG). Take an ornament tag from The Giving Tree and purchase the named items or give the donation listed by Sunday, Dec. 11th. Checks can be placed in the offering plate with the ornament tag attached. Children and adult gift donations can be placed in the large baskets or decorated box next to the Christmas tree. Food and personal care items can be placed in the Neighbor's barrel in the same location.

Thanks so much to all who give to others during this Christmas season!

"Yes, God will give you so much so that you can give away much, and when we take your gifts to those who need them- they will break out into thanksgiving and praise to God for your help." II Cor. 9:11

Neighbor's Inc. "Love Your Neighbor"

"Love Your Neighbor" is a program designed to help people who are financially unable to provide Christmas gifts for their immediate family. This is the 45th year Neighbor's Inc. has helped people of this community. Forty-five years ago, a group of volunteers from local churches gathered to put that "love your neighbor" concept together. That same sentiment continues to be the guiding force behind the work they do each and every day. Opportunities to take part can be through gifts of new clothing and toys for kids and teens, through the Adopt a Family or Adopt a Senior Program and through gifts of cash, check or gift certificates. **From gifts under the tree to food on the table to warm winter clothes, Neighbor's Inc is able to help families celebrate and enjoy their time together.** Time is another wonderful gift to give. Considerable numbers of volunteers are needed to sort and package gifts, visit or call home-bound, or drive clients to medical appointments (call 651-306-2152).

Advent Memorial Tree-Lighting Services

December 3- 9:00am and 10:30am

There are only a few days left (due Nov. 28) to get in your Memorial Forms and donation checks. Place them in the offering plate or give them to Kay in the office.

Memorial Lights donations are given equally to Bethesda's four missions!

Come celebrate the light of Christ and help share this light with others as we remember loved ones that went before us.

Thank you to all who participated in Memorial Lights. The warmth of the lights matches the warmth we feel in our hearts as we remember our loved ones. This warmth will touch many in our neighborhood because of the donations you have given to our church missions.



DECEMBER 2017

"WALK IN LOVE, AS CHRIST HAS LOVED US" Ephesians 5:2

GREETINGS WOMEN OF BETHESDA

Greetings,

We had a wonderful turnout for the boutique due to all the great volunteers that continue to give of their time and talents that God has blessed them with. Thank you all for sharing God's love and kindness. "For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him". Matthew 2:2.

Our Advent program, with appetizers and desserts, is Tuesday Dec. 5 @ 6pm. The theme is "Baking up Christmas" (and no, we will not be baking!!). Come to find where this theme will take us. Please bring an appetizer or a dessert-- there will not be a sign up sheet this time. Currently on the bulletin board is a posted list of needed items for Neighbors. If you would like to donate a gift please bring it that evening and leave it unwrapped. They will be taken to Neighbors on Dec. 6th. Please invite your friends to join us.

Sisters in Christ,
Nancy Todd & Dianna Houska

UPCOMING EVENTS

Refresh and Renew Feb. 24th

Coffee BREAK! Fair Trade Coffee is ordered by the Women of Bethesda and is used on Sunday mornings as well as at all other Bethesda events. If you would like to purchase some coffee it is available in the lounge.

Watch your emails for more information on future events.

Contact Information

Dianna Houska 651-493-0129 dianna.houska@gmail.com
Nancy Todd 651-455-2982 nancytodd19@yahoo.com
Womenofbethesda@gmail.com



REGULARLY SCHEDULED EVENTS

Wednesday Bible study
9:30-11:00 am. We are studying "Galatians: Why God accepts Us".

Contact Sharon Stanefski to join this group or just show up!

Book Club
We will resume in the new year.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

**Advent Appetizers
and Program**
Tue. Dec. 5th
6:00 pm

Refresh and Renew
Feb. 24th, 2018

**Watch your e-mails
for future events**

Women's Ministry Board Members

Co presidents:
Dianna Houska &
Nancy Todd

Co-vice presidents:
Jane Walker
Renee Deshane

Secretary:
Naomi Dorau

Treasurer:
Jennifer Tiedman

Bulletin board design:
Naomi Dorau
Sharon Stanefski

Boutique spaces:
Lynette Thorson

Cookies for Shut-ins:
Dawn Sargent
Danielle Coursele

Additional Advisors:
Marsha Morgan
Sally Muraski

Bell Echoes Editor:
Pattie Rooney

ReRefresh & ReNew Chairs:
Cheryl Hilber
Robin Ross
Sharon Stanefski



DECEMBER 2017

Youth News at Bethesda



Dates to Remember:

- ◆ *Dec. 15th*
Intergenerational
Movie Night
- ◆ *Feb & Mar -*
Youth sponsored
Lenten Dinners
- ◆ *July 7th-15th*
Youth Mission
Trip
- ◆ *July 2018 Youth*
Bible Camp
- ◆ *August 2018*
Relay For Life

On **Friday December 15th**, we are having an intergenerational Christmas movie night. There will be pizza served and we will be watching "Miracle on 34th Street." **ALL** are welcome to attend, please come and join us from 6:30 until 9:30!

We are headed to Houston Texas the week of July 7th through the 15th and have 7 youth registered. We are still looking for a female chaperone. If you are interested see Jacob Backman for details. If you are still interested as a youth, see Jacob and we will see if we can find you a spot! During this trip we will be doing some Disaster relief and house repairs caused by the recent hurricane damage.



Thank you to everyone who placed a Wreath order this Fall. Once again our sale was a success. With your support our Youth are able to participate in the Youth Mission Trip and attend Bible camp at Wapo.

Contact the youth team with any questions!

Jacob Backman: jacob.backman@comcast.net
Kim Burress: kburress@msn.com or 651-457-7080 or 651-260-3922
Beth McCabe bmccabe088@gmail.com



**The Christmas Program
Preschool through 12 grade**

December 3rd

10:00 to 10:30-Practice for the Christmas Program

December 9th (Saturday)

10:00 11:30- Dress Rehearsal for the Christmas Program

December 10th

9:30-Dress Rehearsal for the Christmas Program

10:30 Christmas Program-2nd Service

December 17th

No Sunday School

December 24th

No Sunday School

December 31st

No Sunday School

Enjoy your family and your time off from School! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mindie Schussler
Sunday School Coordinator
mindie.schussler@gmail.com
cell- 612-875-6622

Stewardship

1 Corinthians 16:2 “On the first day of each week, each one of you set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, so when I come no collections will have to be made.”

2 Corinthians 8:12 “For if the willingness is there the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.”

2 Corinthians 9:7 “Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give and not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

These are the directions of giving from the Bible..

It is that time of year again! Time to see how your giving for 2017 meets with your commitment. Statements are being prepared to assist you in your decision for your commitment to Bethesda for 2018.

Pledge cards will be available soon. They help in planning of the budget for 2018.

We have had a very busy 2017. A Pastor leaving, an Interim Pastor guiding us for the majority of the year and calling our new Pastor!! Wow!! We came through 2017 with lots of prayers and allowing God to give us direction. Following his guidance...not to mention a new parking lot and recovering from storm damage.

As you prepare your pledge cards remember all the Blessings we received and how the family of Bethesda all worked together, prayed together and have been so Blessed by God our Father!

If you have any questions or ideas, please contact me (651-319-7943).

Your Stewardship Representative on Bethesda Council,
Dianna Houska

Treasurer's Report

October, 2017

Report explanation: This report is split into three sections. The largest section on the left lists the month end balances for all funds, including the general fund. The top section on the right is the Statement of Activities report that shows the income and expense activity for the general fund categories. The bottom box on the right lists the liabilities, currently consisting of the monthly payroll withholding, the renovation mortgage balance and the Tax Assessment loan with the Thoring Fund.

Please contact Gary Johnson with any questions.

All Funds	Balance
General Fund	(\$15,863.36)
Capital	24,753.78
Parking Lot	24,055.81
Mortgage Reduction	5,084.69
Sunday School	682.37
Altar Flowers Fund In/Out	78.75
Dedicated Memorial	3,250.00
Undedicated Memorial	0.00
Garden Party	148.56
Special Appeals In/Out	9,099.23
Wedding	140.00
Vacation Bible School	0.00
Contemporary Choir	855.00
Thoring Income	0.00
Bethesda Resource Center	584.74
Bible Fund	200.00
Choir	1,531.81
Youth Mission Trip	1,274.49
Youth Faith Based Activities	395.51
Youth Camp Travel Fund	748.09
Hohle Scholarship	0.00
Timmy Autey Camp Scholarship	2,671.13
Christian Care Fund	836.23
Men's Club	54.00
Parish Nurse	692.00
Pastor's Trip	0.00
Smores (Outreach)	3,033.77
Financial University Fund	201.96
Paul & Agnes Thoring Endowed Fund	94,092.00
Missions	816.25
Tech Team	525.62
Mission Trip Scholarship - ILAG	2,272.46
Mission Trip Scholarship - Youth	2,245.99
Sidewalk Fund	423.88
Rain Gardens Fund	0.00
New Sign Fund	5,911.00
Total All Funds	\$ 170,795.76

Statement of Activities	October	Year-To-Date
Income:		
Envelopes	\$ 18,051.75	\$ 135,393.34
Loose	282.00	2,419.45
Adopt-A-Bill	320.00	1,055.00
Other General Fund	7.31	881.90
Thrivent Dollars	477.00	1,980.00
Preschool Rent	1,163.50	9,507.00
Fund Raisers	3,481.00	11,225.50
Coffee Fund	-147.00	868.11
Total General Fund Income:	\$ 23,929.56	\$ 163,330.30
Expenses:		
Salary Expense	\$ 9,543.45	\$ 103,656.20
Non-Salary General & Administrative	305.16	12,375.03
Property	1,118.62	33,037.18
Worship And Music	206.79	1,604.20
Education	0.00	1,095.09
Youth	258.90	647.03
Smores	0.00	0.00
Stewardship	0.00	0.00
ELCA Mission Support	0.00	0.00
Camp Wapogasset	0.00	0.00
Total General Fund Expenses:	\$ 11,432.92	\$ 152,414.73

Liabilities	Balance
Payroll Withholding	\$ 1,653.02
Thrivent Financial Mortgage	428,332.62
Thoring Loan (Tax Assessment)	10,908.00
Total Liabilities	\$440,893.64

Average monthly income needed to make 2017 budget:	\$ 17,551.25
Current month General Fund income:	\$ 23,929.56
Average actual Year-To-Date General Fund Income:	\$ 16,333.03
Average actual Year-To-Date General Fund Expense:	\$ 15,241.47



December 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 9:30am Putting Up the Lights
3 1st Sunday of Advent 9:00am Worship Service* 10:00am Sunday School 10:30pm Contemporary Worship Service*	4 5:00pm Executive Mtg. 6:30-8:00pm Advent Bible Study 6:30pm Quilting B's 6:30pm Boy Scouts	5 10:00am Prayer Group 6:00pm Women's Advent Event 6:30pm Property Team 6:30pm Contemporary Band Rehearsal	6 9:00-10:30am Women's Bible Study 11:00am Mobile Meals 6:30pm Confirmation 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal	7 10:00am Bible Study 6:30pm SMDRE Mtg.	8	9 10:00am Sunday School Practice
10 2nd Sunday of Advent 9:00am Worship Service 10:30pm Contemporary Worship Service—Sunday School Program	11 6:30-8:00pm Advent Bible Study 6:30pm Boy Scouts	12 10:00am Prayer Group 6:30pm Contemporary Band Rehearsal	13 9:30-11:00am Women's Bible Study 6:30pm Confirmation 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal	14 10:00am Bible Study	15	16
17 3rd Sunday of Advent 9:00am Worship Service* 10:00am Sunday School 10:30pm Contemporary Worship Service*	18 1:00pm Quilting B's 6:30-8:00pm Advent Bible Study 6:30pm Boy Scouts	19 10:00am Prayer Group 6:30pm Council Mtg. 6:30pm Contemporary Band Rehearsal	20 6:30pm Confirmation 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal	21 10:00am Bible Study	22	23
24 Christmas Eve 9:00am Worship Service 4:30pm Family Worship Service 10:30pm Candlelight Worship Service*		26	27	28	29	30
31 1st Sunday after Christmas 9:00am Worship Service 10:00am Sunday School 10:30pm Contemporary Worship Service						



December 2017 Birthdays

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Darla Munkholm	2
3	4 Joseph Brattan	5	6 Jodi Lowell	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 Kristin Bishop	18	19	20	21	22 Nathan Schussler	23 George Pankonin
24	25 Jonathan Murray 	26 Diann Houska	27	28	29 Laura O'Donnell	30 Mary Luhman Rozlyn Wilson
31						

Do you know of a Shut-in? We need your help in identifying those members who are unable to attend church due to disability or illness. Please provide the name and address of the person(s) to Dawn Sargent or drop the information off in the office.

Cookies for the Shut-ins will be collected on Sunday, December 17, between the services. We have approximately 24 people on our list; therefore, please provide four dozen cookies in baggies containing two cookies each.

Also, if you are able to help drop off cookies to the Shut-in(s), contact Dawn Sargent.

"OUR PRAYERS"

*Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction,
faithful in prayer.*

Romans 12:12



OUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK

We ask that you keep these concerns in your prayers throughout the week. Please update us by filling out the prayer cards, available at the usher's station. Bethesda's Prayer Group meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. in the Pastor's office, lifting the concerns of the week before our Lord.

We pray for the community and world:

For peace and justice throughout our world; For our leaders, who are facing important decisions and conflicts; For the unemployed and those going through financial distress; For the needed and necessary ministry among the poor. Neighbors, Inc. and Feed My Starving Children

For our sisters and brothers in the Augustinian Lutheran Church of Guatemala and for our companion partner congregations Milagro de Dios, and Living Joy

We pray for the family and friends of:

Lee Matejka

Erwin Johnson, died October 28th

In our "circle of friends" (with long term care needs):

Tom Muraski, Loren Neubauer, Tom Classen, Emily Willette, Andy Benjamin (friend of Renee and Chet DeSchane), Carol Evenson, Lorna Hohle, Dawn Belotta (daughter of Maxine Pfeiffer), George Pankonin, Evelyn Johnson (granddaughter of Donna and Gary Johnson), Christopher Johnson (son of Gary and Donna Johnson), Clarence and Lucille Sharrow, Ardie Bratten, Gloria Johnson, Ronald Willerton, Bill O'Neill, Helen Schadegg, Dorothy Nelson, Lovina Gustafson, Marian Petersen

For those with health concerns:

David Johnson, Kaelee DuFrame (Ray Morency's niece's granddaughter), Dianna Houska, Cheryl Hilber, Elsie Johnson, Lloyd Sachs, John Sargent, Donna Johnson, Kim Burress, Brian Ginsbach (cousin of Ann Siegel), Christine Tarzia (friend of Renee DeSchane), Felisita Delgado, Tonia Becerra, Barb Roth, Pastor Sue Gravelle (friend of Kim Burress), Amber Thorson, Jane Gustafson, Kay Roberts, Finley Doyle (great granddaughter of Sally Muraski), Kelsey Breitkruetz, Emersyn Kay Johnson, Clementine Brown, Kyla Henderson (friend of Amber Thorson), Renee Edmunds, Larry Krech (nephew of Fran Delia), Judy Carney (sister of Naomi Dorau), Kyle Galle, Jane Walker, Mary Jacobs, Julie Swedberg, Jerry Ohmann (friend of Jane McLagan), Kelly Dohmen, Kris Jore, Miranda McLagan (great niece of Jane and Clint McLagan), Mary Morness, Dale Knutson (nephew of Jane Gustafson)

Hospice:

Darleen Heltne

Prayers of Thanksgiving: