

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. —JOHN 1:1-5 (NIV)

Dear God's Beloved,

The text above is one we often hear on Christmas Day. John wanted to start his gospel in a similar fashion as the Hebrew scriptures—with the beginning. We use this “creation story” because Christmas marks the beginning of Emmanuel—“God with us.” Paired with the season of Advent we experience a lot of beginnings and endings.

We see an end to the days growing shorter and the beginning of longer period of daylight. We see the end of fall and the beginning of winter. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year begins. Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving, and yet, the world as we know it spins madly on. It can be hard to begin this journey again—the journey of following Jesus—from his birth in a manger to his death on the cross and answering the call of discipleship. It can be hard to start again asking ourselves—what's next? How do we serve? How can we be God's hands and feet in the world? Yet—that is what we are called to do.

Therefore, this Advent we will be following the theme “Words for the Beginning: Advent reminder for new Seasons.” As we navigate seasons and times of life filled with endings and beginnings we need reminders. We need words that can feel like steady ground, like a path for our feet to find as we step forward into the unknown. Words from Mary, Zechariah, Ruth, Joseph, Isaiah, and the angel Gabriel will help us remember that we have a God who dwells with us and makes all things new.

As we begin Advent together, I invite you to ponder...Where have you seen God in the beginnings and endings in your life? When do you feel God with you, with us, this time of year (Advent and Christmas)?

For me, it's the moments filled with a child's laughter as well as tears. It's a reminder that God enters our lives. It is also in the stillness of snow falling and candlelight flickering. Those a reminder to me that God has the power to change a landscape with power and gentleness all while providing a glowing light to the world.

A Blessing on the occasion of Jesus' birth

By Kate Bowler

This is the beginning for us,
but not for you.
You were there with God
from the beginning.
No, wait, from before that.
From the vastness of eternity
Without beginnings or ends...
...It is you who are launching this
New start for us,
this new reality that you come to reveal,
for it is by your light
that we see the world as it really is,
and the truth of it all,
That though the mighty of this world
may grasp power for a time,
their thrones are shaky and will fall.

That though the wise of this world
may hold sway for a season,
their words will be washed away
like sandcastles on the shore.

Blessed are we who rejoice to know that the
powerful of this world are as nothing in
the presence of true majesty.
You are love eternal,
present to us yesterday, today,
and right to the end.

Blessed are we who say,
Lord, yours is the light that draws a line
between every good and every harm.
You have come and now we can only
shake our heads in wonder
that today, on the birthday of your life,
your story is our own.



December Updates

Family Sunday School


Our next Family Sunday School will be held Dec. 8 at 3 PM. We will gather for some storytelling, fellowship, fun, and support. Plus a special visitor (Santa) will be joining us to share with us a special message about love. Come join us!

If you can, please let Pastor Lucy know, if you'll be attending.

We want to make sure we have enough materials for everyone :)

Advent Mid-Week Worship

Advent mid-week worships will be Dec. 4, 11, and 18 (all Wednesdays) at 6:30 PM at Bethany. There will also be a meal and fellowship before service. The theme this year is Words For The Beginning. 2024 may be nearing its end but a new church year is just beginning. How can we find love, hope, and the spirit to begin again?



Addresses for those who cannot joins us for
Worship at Bethany

Ken & Marcia Adams
634 S. Division St
New Lisbon, WI 53950

Fran Benson
Onalaska Care Center
Room 315
1600 Main Street
Onalaska WI 54650

Edna Hansen
Crest View Nursing
Home
612 View Street
New Lisbon WI 53950

Anna Kirkwood
Fair View Nursing
Home
Toom 602
1050 Division Street
Mauston WI 53950

Lorraine Schultz
Tomah Care Center
1505 Butts Ave
Tomah WI 54660

Dennis Stark
Villa Pines Living
Center
Room 304
201 S Park Street
Friendship WI 53934



2024 December Worship Assistants

East Lemonweir

Readers

12/1 – Audrey Scholl
12/8 – Dawn Nelson
12/15 – Connie Wolfgram
12/22 – Kathryn Pitcel
12/25 – Roger Nelson
12/29 - Diane Clark

Greeters

12/1 - Jennifer Sarnow
12/8 – Audrey Scholl
12/15 – Gayle Hempel
12/22 – Roger & Kathryn Pitcel
12/25 – Roger & Dawn Nelson
12/29 - Diane Clark

Bethany Assistants

12/1

Assistant Minister – Galen Lingl
Reader – Barb Parker
Communion Assistant – Galen Lingl
Usher – Tim Parker & Shane Gesler

12/8

Assistant Minister – Beth Preuss
Reader – Larry Thome
Communion Assistants- Beth Preuss,
Inger Kirkwood, Deanna Smith
Usher – Larry & Kathy Thome

Advent @ Bethany

5:15 Meal

6:30 Worship

12/4 **Advent** To be determined
12/11 **Advent** To be determined
12/18 **Advent** To be determined

**** If you are not able to meet the schedule, please exchange and if you aren't able to find someone let OFFICE know.**

12/15

Assistant Minister – Larry Thome
Reader – Ross Hardie
Communion Assistant – Larry Thome
Usher - Mark & Debby Hansen

12/22

Assistant Minister – Michael Korbein
Reader – Sheila Stark
Communion Assistants- Michael Korbein, Betty Krotzman, Barb Parker
Usher – Mike & Lori Esser

12/24

Assistant Minister – Mark Hansen
Reader – Debby Hansen
Communion Assistants – Mark Hansen, Inger Kirkwood, Barb Parker
Ushers - Tim Parker & Karl Katuin

12/29

Hymns & Scriptures

Reader – To be determined
Usher – Shane Gesler
No Communion

December 2024

Bethany and East Lemonweir Lutheran Parish

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Altar communion Bethany Council Meeting	2	3 4 pm Rachael Circle - Bethany	4 9 am Quilting @ Bethany 5:15 p Supper 6:30 Advent Service	5 930 am Bible Study	6 10 am Brunch @ Bethany	7
8 3pm Family Sunday School. WELCA Mtg after Bethany Worship. Cont. Communion	9	10	11 9 am Quilting @ Bethany 5:15 p Supper 6:30 Advent Service	12 930 am Bible Study	13	14
15 Altar Communion. Christmas Trivia follows Bethany Worship	16	17	18 9 am Quilting @ Bethany 5:15 p Supper 6:30 Advent Service	19 930 am Bible Study	20	21
22 Cont. Communion	23	24 4:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship @ Bethany	25 10:30 am Christmas Day Worship	26	27	28
29 Cont Communion Scripture & Hymns	30	31	12/8 Could you share half dozen cookies for Bethany shut ins?	12/31-1/5 Pastor Vacation Time	6:30 pm AA Mtg. Tues @ East Lemonweir Thurs. @ Bethany	Worship Times 9 am Bethany 1030 am East Lemonweir

**December 2025
Celebrations**



Merry Christmas

Bethany Birthdays

John York – 2
Ilea Heffler – 6
Shayna Sletten – 6
Lane Krizan – 7
Donna Klentz – 10
Michaele Korbein - 13
Jolene York -17
Scott Gollmar – 17
Darrell Johnson – 19
Ross Krizan – 24
Suzanne Brzoka – 26
Debby Hansen – 26
Allyssa Allard – 27

East Lemonweir Birthdays

Michael Stoughtenger – 4
Deanna Brownell – 18

Bethany Anniversaries

Mark & Christy Toelle – 31

East Lemonweir Anniversaries

Edward & Sharron Groskreutz – 21

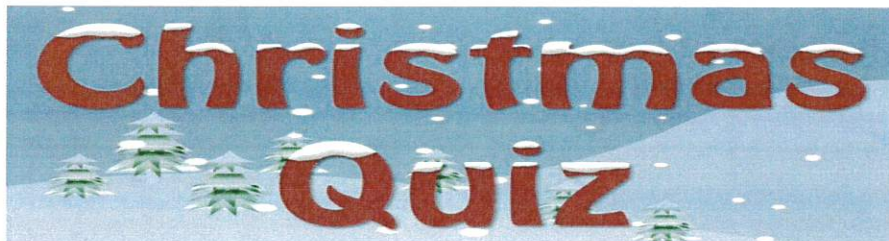
If your celebration is not included,
you want it included, please let the
office know.

A December to Remember

It's Team Trivia Time!

Join us at Bethany following the
December 15th service for
fun and fellowship!

- *Work together as a **team** to answer a variety of "Christmas" trivia questions.
- *There will be a maximum of 5 teams. The number of people on a team is determined by the number of participants.
- *Prizes will be awarded to the team with the most points after three rounds of questions.



W-ELCA News

Mission Statement – To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ

Fruit baskets for our home bound members. W-ELCA would appreciate a half dozen cookies for the fruit baskets.

Upcoming Events:

Friday, Dec. 6th at 10:00 a.m., Christmas Brunch

Sunday, Dec. 8th – W-ELCA meets to assemble fruit baskets and decide end of year disbursements.

Wed., Dec. 11th- serve dinner before Advent service

A thought: It's not what's under the tree that matters most, it's who's around it

Thank you to everyone who reached out during my recent health events. Your kind words, cards, and prayers were appreciated.

Jack and Betty Krotzman

Bethany Coffee after worship. All are welcome. Please join us and get to know us.

If you are able to bring a treat to pass, please sign up on the white board in the narthex. Just select the Sunday you wish to bring treats. You can serve or not serve.

EAST LEMONWEIR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Meeting

November 17, 2024

Present: Pastor Hardie, Roger Nelson, Jennifer Sarnow, Margarete Hummelbeck, Roger Pitcel, Kathryn Pitcel, and Marlene Pelton.

Absent: Connie Wolfgram and Audrey Scholl.

President Roger Nelson called the November 17, 2024 council meeting to order following Sunday's coffee fellowship. Opening devotions were given by Pastor Lucy Hardie.

Motion made by Kathryn Pitcel and second by Margarete Hummelbeck to approve the secretary's report. Motion carried. Motion made by Marlene Pelton and second by Jennifer Sarnow to approve the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Tomah Welding is working on making the railings for the exterior steps.

There will be a joint Council Meeting with Bethany on Wednesday, December 11, 2024 5:00 p.m.

Mid-week Advent worship services to be held at Bethany on December 4, 11, and 18. Pastor asked East Lemonweir to provide supper for the 18th. Plan to serve 30-40 beginning at 5:15 p.m.

Pastor has a vacation Sunday November 24, 2024. Bethany's Mark Hansen will conduct our worship service. Pastor will also be gone on Sunday, January 5, 2025.

Pastor asked for reflection on the council's meeting on October 20, 2024, with the Assistant to the Bishop Dione Stepanek.

Closed with praying the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene Pelton, pro-tempore

Bethany Lutheran Church, New Lisbon, WI
Church Council Meeting Minutes
Sunday, November 3, 2024

Council Members present: Pastor Lucy Hardie, Mark Hansen, Michael Korbein, Glenda Swinehart, Karl Katuin, Deanna Smith, Shane Gesler, Inger Kirkwood, Christy Toelle,
Council members absent: Larry Thome

- 1. Call to Order:** President Mark Hansen called the council meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.
- 2. Approve Agenda:** Christy Toelle made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Glenda Swinehart; motion passed 8-0.
- 3. Devotions:** Glenda Swinehart provided devotions.
- 4. Secretary's Report:** Shane Gesler made a motion to accept the October 6, 2024 Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Karl Katuin; motion passed 8-0.
- 4. Treasurer's Report:** The October year-to-date financial reports were presented. Christy Toelle made a motion to accept the October Treasurer's reports as presented, seconded by Inger Kirkwood; motion passed 8-0.
- 5. Pastor Report:** Several guests have expressed interest in becoming members. Thank you to all who helped with the celebration of Marlene Fish's life while Julie was gone. The Sunshine Movement ministry will be needing new leadership; Pastor will be getting a list of responsibilities for this from Collette Schultz. December 1 is the first Sunday in Advent, so the tree can be put up after November 24.
- 6. Committee Reports:**
 - a. Discipleship:** A request was made to include \$500 in 2025 budget for Outreach. Trunk or Treat went well but ran out of candy and postcards. A postcard is being planned to go to addresses in the New Lisbon code area for upcoming events and services. Discussed if there are any Thanksgiving Day meals being served in the area -could do an ecumenical meal on Thanksgiving Day in 2025. Noted that 2025 Calendars will be ordered.
 - b. Education:** Sunday School is not doing well -may need to communicate more on that, as only one family came in October. Will try this again in December, including Santa visiting for pictures on December 8.
 - c. Property:** The drive belt on the garden tractor was replaced to be ready for next spring.
 - d. Social Concerns:** 154 health kits, 165 quilts, and 12 baby kits were created and packaged up this year to be sent out for world mission! Thank you to all who helped in any way! Thanksgiving baskets are changing this year. To not duplicate services the food pantry provides, Bethany will instead give gift cards for meals during the holidays to help provide nutritious meals to children who would normally have gotten meals at school but will not, since school will be closed during that time. The school nurse will provide us a list of families for this.
 - e. Social Concerns:** Nothing new.
- 7. Old Business:**
 - a. Administrative Assistant position:** No applications received yet, so this will be posted and advertised.
 - b. Skylight:** The skylight is finally closed up, but it is not stained as dark as rest of the ceiling.
 - c. Church cleaning:** We are looking for assistance to help clean the church several times a month, with a focus on bathrooms, kitchen floor mopping, vacuuming, and windows. This could be on a rotating schedule. If anyone is interested let a council member or Pastor know.
- 8. New Business:**
 - a. Snowplowing:** Mike Coughlin plowed snow last year. His price is \$75/hour and \$400/ton for salt distributed, same as last year. Glenda Swinehart made a motion to accept Mike Coughlin to snowplow for this winter at those rates, seconded by Christy Toelle; motion passed 8-0.
 - b. Lights at the Park:** Paint on the figurines is being touched up by Cindy Costello; need a new star, though. Mitten tree will be put up again to collect mittens, caps, and scarves for those in need at school and to be picked up in the park.
 - c. Advent Services:** These will be December 4, 11, & 18. Council will provide one of those meal of pulled pork for the meal on the 4th.
 - d. Pastoral Review:** Besides an evaluation of Pastor, Pastor will be evaluating Council.
 - e. Budget:** A work-in-progress budget was presented with several changes noted to be made. December 11 will be the joint meeting with East Lemonweir to go over the shared budget items prior to worship that evening. The budget will go to Council at their first meeting in January to be approved there, and then the final budget will go to the annual meeting later in January for the congregation to vote on it.
- 9. Next Meeting:** Next Council meeting will be December 1, 2024 at 12 noon, with Larry Thome providing devotions. He will also have Sunday announcements for the month of December.
- 10. Adjourn Meeting/Closing Prayer:** Karl Katuin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Shane Gesler; motion passed 8-0. The Lord's Prayer was prayed in closing. The meeting adjourned at 1:20pm.

Respectfully submitted by Michael Korbein, Secretary pro tem

PLEASE JOIN US

WHAT: ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POTLUCK BRUNCH

WHEN: FRIDAY, DEC. 6THTH AT 10:00 A.M.

WHERE: FELLOWSHIP HALL

PLEASE BRING: (IF YOU CHOOSE)

* A DISH TO PASS

* A GIFT OF NO MORE THAN \$5.00 TO EXCHANGE

* A NON PERISHABLE ITEM FOR THE FOOD PANTRY (CANNED VEGETABLES/FRUIT, INSTANT POTATOES, VARIOUS SOUPS, PEANUT BUTTER)

WE'LL ENJOY FELLOWSHIP, ENTERTAINMENT, FUN AND FOOD. THIS IS A GOOD WAY TO BEGIN THE CHRISTMAS SEASON.

PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE SHEET PROVIDED ON THE ROUND TABLE IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL OR CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE.

SEE YOU THERE!

Prime Rib Dinner

**Saturday
January 25
2025**

5:00 PM — Doors Open

Appetizers

Purchase of Raffle Basket Tickets

6:00 PM— Dinner

Sponsored by the
East Lemonweir Lutheran Church
Cty. Hwy. S between
New Lisbon and Elroy off Hwy. 80

*“The Little White Church
on the Hill”*

Cost: \$30.00 per person

A limited number of tickets will be sold

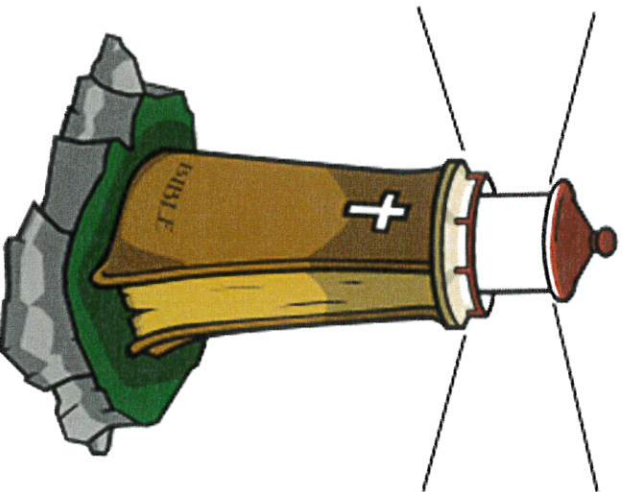
**For Tickets Contact: Dawn Nelson 608-547-5209
or Jennifer Sarnow 608-847-7057**



Bethany and East Lemonweir Lutheran Churches
618 West River Street
New Lisbon, WI. 53950
RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

The Beacon

Bethany / East Lemonweir Parish
December 2024



Isaiah 9:6-7
For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.