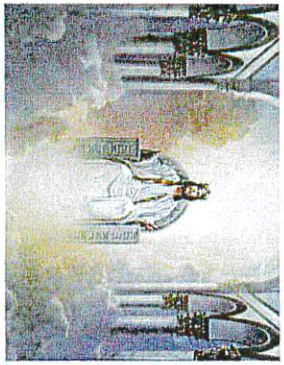
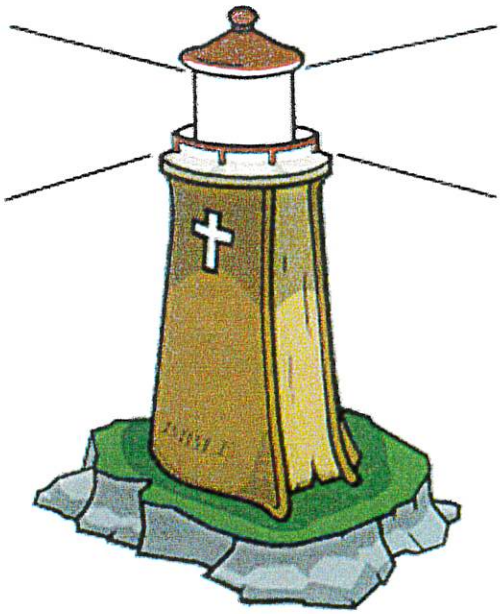


Bethany and East Lemonweir Lutheran Churches
618 West River Street
New Lisbon, WI. 53950

RETURN SERVICES *REQUESTED*

The Beacon

Bethany / East Lemonweir Parish
December 2025



Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." – Luke 2:13-14

Bethany and East Lemonweir Lutheran Parish

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9am Worship @Bethany 10:30am Worship @ East Lemonweir	**1**	**2** Rachel Circle 4pm	**3 At Bethany** Quilting 9 am 5PM Supper 6:30 PM Advent Service	**4** 9 am Bible Study @ Bethany	**5** 10 am Bethany Brunch	**6**
7 After Bethany Team Trivia & Fruit Basket Assembled 12 PM Bethany Council Mtg	**8**	**9**	**10 At Bethany** Quilting 9 am 5PM Supper 6:30 PM Advent Service	**11** 9 am Bible Study @ Bethany	**12**	**13**
14 10 am Family Sunday School with a special visitor Stocking Auction Ends @ 10 am	**15**	**16 Beacon Articles due**	**17 At Bethany** Quilting 9 am 5PM Supper 6:30 PM Advent Service	**18** 9 am Bible Study @ Bethany	**19**	**20**
21	**22**	**23**	**24** 4:30 pm Christmas Eve Service @ Bethany	**25** 10:30 am Christmas Day Service @ East Lemonweir	**26**	**27**
28	**29**	**30**	**31** Quilting 9 am	9 am Bible Study @ Bethany	AA Mtg. 6:30pm Tues @ East Lemonweir Thur @ Bethany	

Advent Greetings!

November 30th marked the first Sunday of Advent, the first season of the new church year. As I've prepared for Advent services of Sundays and Mid-week, I've found myself thinking quite a bit about the origin of Advent. So here are some of my thoughts on Advent.

Scholars believe that in the early church Advent was originally a 40-day season that centered around prayer, penance, and fasting to prepare for the celebration of God's incarnation at Epiphany (similar to Lent and the journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter). New Christians wishing to be baptized would also spend time in preparation and learning during this time and receive the sacrament of baptism on Epiphany. During this time—there was less emphasis on Christmas and more celebration around the day that honored when Christ was revealed to the whole world through the visit by the Magi.

By the Middle Ages, Advent started to look completely different. Instead of a 7 week focus on prayer and penance, it morphed into a 4-week period that focused on prayer, expectation, and preparation for the coming of Christ that centered not on the visit of the Magi but on Christ's birth in Bethlehem.

The word Advent comes from the Latin word "adventus" which is translated literally as "coming." Which makes sense that a season expecting Christ's coming into the world would be titled that way. But we also know that Christ's first coming into the world at Christmas is not the only time his presence is promised. Christ also promises to come again. Therefore, advent has now grown into a season of dual purpose. It is a time that we remember both the Son's incarnation through the Christ child as well as the promise of Christ's second coming—fully bringing God's kingdom to fruition.

It's a very Lutheran season, as we like to live and think about God in the both/and. God is here, with us as "Immanuel," and then also not fully revealed. We celebrate the relationship we can now have with God because of Christ's birth and also watch, listen, and anticipate for that relationship to be fully opened.

So yes—some of the texts you will hear this season will call for us to repent—to admit our sins, seek and receive forgiveness so that we can turn away from the world and return to God. But we also do this with hope, peace, joy, and love in our hearts because God's forgiveness and presence in our lives isn't just something that we hope for in an unknown future. We seek forgiveness and forgive others because God is with us now. We remember how hope, peace, joy, and love was made real through a baby, born in simplicity, and yet is a far greater gift than any of us could imagine. And we anticipate and see how the gift of God with us continues to work in our lives.

-Pastor Lucy

Join us for Mid-week Service and Dinner!

Dinner starts at 5pm, Service at 6:30

December 3: Tacos hosted by Bethany Council

December 10: Tator Tot Hotdish hosted by Bethany W-ELCA

December 17: Pulled Pork Sandwiches hosted by East Lemonweir Council

Each service will be centered around praying for healing. We will pray for the healing of the nations (12/3), healing for creation (12/10), and conclude with a service of healing with anointing (12/17).

December 2025 Worship Assistants

East Lemonweir Readers

12/7 – Roger Nelson

12/14 – Bret Haschke

12/21 – Jennifer Sarnow

12/25 – Roger Nelson

12/28 – Dawn Nelson

East Lemonweir Greeters

12/7 – Bret & Billie Jo Haschke

12/14 – Audrey Scholl

12/21 – Diane Clark

12/25 – Jennifer Sarnow

12/28 – Ted Haschke

Bethany

12/7 – Assistant Minister – Larry Thome

Reader – Ross Hardie

Communion Assistants – Larry Thome

Ushers – Collette Schulz & Beth Preuss

12/14 –Assistant Minister – Galen Lingl

Reader – Sheila Stark

Communion Assistants – Galen Lingl, Inger Kirkwood, Betty Krotzman

Ushers – Larry & Kathy Thome

12/21 – Assistant Minister – Beth Preuss

Reader – Barb Parker

Communion Assistant – Beth Preuss

Ushers - Shane Gesler & Collette Schulz

12/24 – Assistant Minister – Mark Hansen

Reader – Debby Hansen

Communion Assistants – Mark Hansen, Michaele Korbein, Barb Parker

Ushers – Tim Parker & Karl Katuin

12/28 Assistant Minister – Michaele Korbein

Reader – To Be Announced

Ushers - Mark & Debby Hansen

Needed monthly for only Bethany's budgeted expenses: $10,866,61

	September	October	Year To Date
Offerings+Other Income received	$ 13,435.46*	$ 35,697.08**	$ 150,915.71
Expenses paid	$ 38,993.48***	$ 19,878.78****	$ 190,163.18

* includes East Lemonweir's budget reimbursement

** includes hail insurance proceeds and East Lemonweir budget reimbursement

*** includes parking lot work and final payment on boiler work

**** includes downpayment on insurance work

East Lemonweir Council Meeting

November 16, 2026

The Council Meeting was called to order at 11:30 am, November 16, 2025, by Roger Nelson, Council President.

Those present were: Pastor Lucy Hardie, Roger Nelson, Gail Hempl, Roger Pitcel, Audrey Scholl, Marlene Pelton, and Connie Wolfgram. Margarette Hummelbeck was absent.

A motion to approve the Secretary Report was made by Gail Hempl and second by Audrey Scholl. Motion passed.

A motion to approve the Treasurer Report was made by Marlene Pelton, and second by Gail Hempl. Motion passed.

Marlene Pelton presented a list for review, of the 2025 projects and expenditures. Marlene Pelton discussed the Elevator Report regarding the Elevator Inspection and Renewal.

Saturday, November 29th, the Christmas tree will be put up and decorated.

A repair needs to be made to the door that leads to the basement. There is also a tear in the upholstery upstairs.

On Wednesday, December 3, at 4:30 pm, a Joint Council meeting with will be held at Bethany.

Discussion regarding the hail storm damage to the parsonage siding, which will be covered by insurance. There will not be a Thanksgiving service. Pastor Lucy Hardie discussed the December 3rd, 10th, and 17th Advent Suppers and Services. The suppers will start at 5pm followed by a 6:30pm services. The 4:30 pm Christmas Eve service will be held at Bethany. The 10:30 am Christmas Day service will be held at East Lemonweir. Pastor will be taking a day off on December 28th. The service will be Lessons and Caroling.

Roger Pitcel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Marlene Pelton seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Wolfgram
Secretary

December 2025
Celebrations

Merry Christmas

If your celebration(s) was not listed,
please let the office know.

Bethany Birthdays
John York – 2
Ilea Baumgart – 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

Bethany Anniversaries
Mark & Christy Toelle – 31

East Lemonweir Birthdays
Michael Stoughtenger – 4
Deanna Brownell – 18

East Lemonweir Anniversaries
Edward & Sharron Groskreutz – 21

Fall Fun for Funding Results:

- Pick-a-Pumpkin and Match (Mrs. York cookies) - $305.00
- Family Pumpkin Decorating Contest - $89.07
- Envelope and Envelope Match - $3,500.00
- Pie and Pie+ Auction – $420.00

GRAND TOTAL = $4,314.07

Thank you to everyone who participated and contributed in any way to help replenish our funds following several large projects at Bethany. Also, thank you to everyone who has increased their weekly/monthly offering. Your support is very much appreciated. YOU make a difference. ☺

72

That's the number of bags packed with hats and mittens that Bethany donated to Holiday Lights in the Park!

A big thank you to all who supported this outreach ministry!!!

A December to Remember

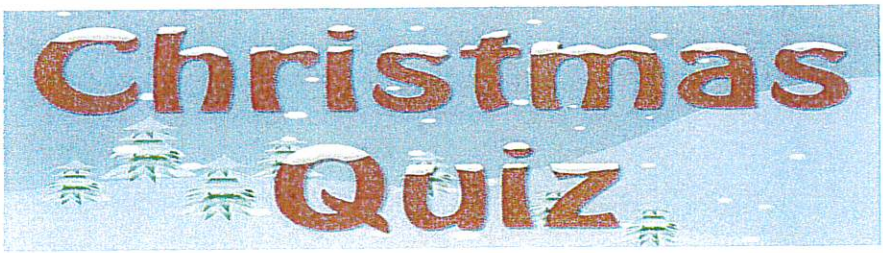
It's Team Trivia Time!

Join us at Bethany following the
December 7th service for
fun and fellowship!

*Work together as a **team** to answer
a variety of 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.



Please Join Us

WHAT: *Annual potluck Christmas Brunch*

WHEN: *Friday, Dec. 5th at 10:00 a.m.*

WHERE: *Fellowship Hall*

PLEASE BRING: *(if you choose)*
*A general gift of no more than $10.00 to exchange
*A non-perishable item for the food pantry.

Enjoy fellowship, entertainment, fun and food.

Let's begin the Christmas Season.

Please sign up on the sheet provided on the round table in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome

See You There!

W-ELCA News

Mission statement: To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

***December Bible study** from our *gather* magazine is "Practicing Advent imagination: Matthew's dreamers and Isaiah's visions". We cannot build a new future that we cannot imagine. The long nights of Advent gift us with time to dream. This study will offer us ways of imagining God's future for us and all creation through the dreams of Joseph, the Three Wise Men and Isaiah.

***Thank you** to everyone who supported our annual Thankoffering.

***Christmas Potluck Brunch Friday, Dec. 5th**

WHEN: Friday, Dec. 5th at 10:00 a.m.
WHERE: Fellowship Hall
PLEASE BRING: (if you choose) Exchange gift up to $10
Non-perishable item for the food pantry.

***Fruit Baskets -** Sunday, Dec. 7 – assemble fruit baskets before church. We'd appreciate donations of ½ dozen cookies to include in these baskets.

***Advent supper** – Wednesday, December 10th. Hot dishes and rolls have been donated. Any sides and desserts would help complete the meal. We also need helpers to prepare and clean up.

***Silent Stocking Auction** – Sunday, December 14th. You can fill a stocking (there are some in the narthex for you to use) or bring items to be put in a stocking (items can be placed in the box provided in the narthex.) Dec. 14th is fast approaching soon, so let's hang those stockings!

Upcoming events:
+Friday, Dec. 5th – Potluck Brunch @10:00 in the Fellowship Hall
+Sunday, Dec. 7th – assemble fruit baskets before church
+Sunday, Dec. 7th – W-ELCA will meet to decide our annual donations. Trivia is scheduled after our service so we will meet at a time that doesn't interfere with those who want to participate in trivia.
Sunday, Dec. 14th – Silent Stocking Auction ends at 10:00 AM

A thought: It is Christmas in the heart that puts Christmas in the air."

Dear members of our Bethany family,

Your unwavering support and generosity towards our church have been essential to our ability to continue carrying out our mission and serving the needs of our community and spreading Christ's Word.

At this time, Bethany is implementing a new e-giving platform, ***Vanco***. This platform provides a secure and user-friendly way to give to our church online, and we are confident that it will make giving more convenient for many members of our congregation.

This is not replacing the regular weekly envelopes, but provides an alternative way to contribute to the mission of our congregation. Some of the highlights of using an e-giving platform:

- By giving online, you will have the ability to provide one-time giving or reoccurring giving (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually). You will be able to give via credit card, debit card or through ACH/bank payment.
- You won't have to worry about writing a check each week, or missing a week... you can set it up once, and your giving will be done automatically each occurrence you request.
- Initially, we have set up the ability to give for regular offerings, the building fund, and the quilting ministry. We will set up additional funds as we increase the use of the e-giving solution.
- This is a very secure, safe solution. It uses that same security encryption that major financial institutions adhere to. There has never been a security breach to Vanco's data.
- There are fees for a transaction.
    - Debit/Credit Card Rate: 2.35% of the transaction amount + $0.35/transaction fee
    - ACH Processing Rate: 0.80% of the transaction amount + $0.35/transaction fee

  There is also the ability to have the fees paid by the donor, and not taken from the donation amount.

There are multiple options to access the Bethany Vanco portal:

- An "Online Giving" button on the Bethany website - https://www.bethanyeast.com/
- A direct link to the Bethany Vanco portal - https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZY4E/home
- Using the QR code above (*it will also be in the bulletin in the near future*)

Whether you choose to give online or as you normally do through our giving envelopes, your support is vital to the continued success of Bethany's ministries.

If anyone has any questions or needs help in setting this up, please feel free to contact me at larrythome@aol.com or 630-244-8861.

Blessings,

Larry Thome

Bethany Lutheran Church – New Lisbon, Wisconsin

Church Council Meeting Minutes

Sunday, November 2, 2025

Council Members Present:	Karl Katuin, Pastor Lucy Hardie, Mark Hansen, Debby Hansen, Inger Kirkwood, Glenda Swinehart, Michaele Korbein, Deanna Smith, Larry Thome
Council Members Absent:	None
Guests:	None

Agenda

Call to Order:	President Karl Katuin called the Council meeting to order at 11:58 AM
Agenda Approval:	Karl Katuin presented the agenda for approval. There was an additional item added to the agenda: Roof Heat Cable Electric Outlets. ***Debby Hansen made a motion to accept the meeting agenda as amended, seconded by Glenda Swinehart; motion passed 8-0.***
Devotion:	Larry Thome shared a devotion about giving thanks in all circumstances based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Whether you see the blessing abounding in your life or you are struggling to find anything to be thankful for, turn to God, the one who blesses you with grace and salvation daily.
Secretary's Report: *(Larry)*	Larry Thome presented the minutes from the October 2025 Council Meeting. There were no questions on the report as presented. ***Mark Hansen made a motion to accept the October 2025 Council Meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Inger Kirkwood; motion passed 8-0.***
Treasurer's Report: *(Michaele)*	Michaele Korbein presented the General Fund Checking Register, the Savings Summary Report, the Statement of Financial Income and Expense and the Bethany Memorial Summary Report as of October 31, 2025. There were no questions or comments on the reports as presented. ***Mark Hansen made a motion to accept the Treasurer's reports as presented, seconded by Deanna Smith; motion passed 8-0.***
Pastor's Report:	There are three mid-week services for Advent – the theme will be "Healing Service;" healing for the world, the nation and self. Bethany Council and W-ELCA will host provide the Wednesday suppers along with East Lemonweir. The Council decided on tacos for the supper.

Committee Reports

Education: *(Deanna)*	Family Sunday School is set for November 9th, but not as 3:00 PM. Going forward all Family Sunday School education will be after Sunday worship – it will be easier for families to join.
Discipleship: *(Glenda and Debby)*	Planning for decorations for Christmas in the Park (Riverside) continues. The mitten tree is now set up in the narthex. Pastor will also create post cards for those using the blessing box to inform them of the mittens/hats at Riverside Park.
Social Concerns: *(Inger)*	All Health and Baby Kits are complete and have been sent off to Lutheran World Relief. There were 154 Health kits and 16 baby kits this year! Pastor will reach out to Sonja Pruess at the New Lisbon schools for the families needing food gift cards. Bethany will again be providing gift cards to needy families over the Christmas break instead of Thanksgiving baskets. Many other organizations in the area are providing Thanksgiving so Bethany decided to provide food gift cards over the Christmas break when children don't have access to school food programs.
Worship: *(Larry)*	No new updates other than Supply Pastor Lisa Shank will lead worship on November 23rd and we need to provide a copy of the bulletin to her in advance of the service.
Property: *(Mark)*	There was a heating issue where Pastor's and Betty's offices were not being heated. Bolder Services was called and they found that when they connected the new A/C, a connection was missed. They fixed this at no charge.

	A Ring door bell system and Alexa video camera will be installed to ensure so that Pastor Lucy and Betty have better security when they are alone at church. As a precaution to any potential security issues during worship, a church safety plan is being considered.
Old Business	
Online Giving:	Prior to the Council meeting, Larry Thome provided the Council with detailed information and online demos of both Vanco and Tight.ly giving solutions. After discussion on both solutions, it was determined that Vanco had the better solution for Bethany. ***Larry Thome made a motion to move forward with Vanco as Bethany's online giving solution, seconded by Mark Hansen; motion passed 8-0.***
Church Storm Damage Repairs:	After contacting E&S Construction that they will be contracted to fix the church/parsonage August storm damage, they provided a January/February start date as they are currently booked through the end of the year.
Snow Plowing:	Michaele Korbein contacted Mike Coughlin, who provided us plowing service last season. He agreed to provide the same service at the same price. Pastor Lucy suggested that we inform him we need the parking lot plowed on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays completed by 8:30 AM at the latest. ***Debby Hansen made a motion to continue to use Mike Coughlin for snow plowing services this season, seconded by Glenda Swinehart; motion passed 8-0.***
New Business	
Church Budget:	Michaele Korbein presented a first cut of the 2026 Bethany budget. The council walked through line items and adjusted as required. Michaele will update the budget with the changes for review at the next meeting. The updated budget will also be used for a discussion with East Lemonweir at a joint budget meeting on December 3rd.
Roof Heating Cable Electric Outlets:	To help combat ice dams on the roof of the church, heat tape was added to the roof last year. This tape was connected to electric outlets using multiple extension cords, which in not a recommended way to run electricity outdoors. Mark Hansen contacted Gray Electric and Crowley Electric for quotes on installing outside outlets. An estimate was received from Gray, but not Crowley. Mark will reach out to Wire Pro Electric in Tomah to solicit another estimate.
Miscellaneous Items:	A hive of bees/wasps have taken sanctuary in our sanctuary. Mark Hansen/Karl Katuin will look into resolving the problem. There is a request to have police presence in the narthex at the Christmas Eve service. This has been done at times in the past. Pastor Lucy will follow up with the New Lisbon police and report at the next meeting.
Next Meeting:	The next Council meeting will be December 7, 2025 at 12:00 PM.
Prayer/Adjourn Meeting:	Pastor Lucy led the Council in a prayer. ***Glenda Swinehart made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Deanna Smith; motion passed 8-0.*** The meeting adjourned at 1:27 PM.

Submitted by Larry Thome, Council Secretary