



# Bethlehem Star

Bethlehem Lutheran Church | Evangelical Lutheran Church of America | January, 2025

Here on this first day after Christmas, December 26, I sit with a cup of coffee reflecting back on the last 25 days of December, the season of Advent and Christmas Day. What an amazing season of preparation and the coming of our Lord.

It truly was a season of hope, peace, joy and love! From the hope of being with our Rankin Presbyterian and Brush United Methodist brothers and sisters, to the peace that came lighting the Advent wreath with our households, to the joy of our young ladies learning Away in the Manger and a first communion with Morgan Gardner, to the love poured out around the Giving Tree, the quilters, the Christmas Tea, and the Living Nativity. Advent Discovery gave us new opportunity to share together multi-generationally learning about Good Gifts (sending animals around the world, creating a Christmas ornament for another, and singing the old familiar hymns that bring Christmas, alive in our hearts. Christmas Eve, as we gathered to share the light, worshiping and adoring the newborn king, Jesus Christ, what an amazing sight to look out into, seeing 70 hand-held candles burning brightly! Can anyone be disappointed, frustrated, or disappointed in God with us, Emmanuel filling our lives? I trust not!!! The glory of the Lord is here with us,

surrounding us, watching us, filling us in His love!!!

And now in the days, the weeks, the months, the year ahead, we like the Magi, travel toward that light, that star of wonder, that star of might, that star of beauty bright. We journey together like the three seeking Him, finding Him; This the Epiphany, the revelation to the Gentiles, God is with us. We, like the Magi, come adoring Him with our gifts, our wisdom, our voices then share Him into a world that is difficult, a world that needs hope, a world that needs peace, a world that needs joy, and a world that needs love.

We, like the Magi pay homage, then travel taking forth what we have seen. We, like the shepherds who knelt at the manger that birth night, make known what we have been told about this child. We, brothers and sisters in Christ, strive to help others know, live, and thrive in Christ, whether from a manger, a dusty road, a hillside, a little town, a cross, or in the sanctuary.

We still have two weeks in the Christmas season. Rejoice, for unto us is born a savior! Thanks be to God!

Blessed Christmas season and Epiphany, to you all!!!  
Ro

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church ~ 603 Custer ~ Brush, CO 80723**

**Rev. Deacon Ro Fesser**

Cell: (970) 631-2715

[lutheranchurchpastor@gmail.com](mailto:lutheranchurchpastor@gmail.com)

**Office Hours:**

Friday 10:30-noon,

Saturday 9-11:30, Sunday 11-1

**SUNDAY WORSHIP**

**9:00 a.m.**

*Gathered together,  
we serve in Christ.*

**Administrative Assistant:**

Terresa Lauck

Office Phone: (970) 842-2246

Email:

[lutheranchurchbrush@yahoo.com](mailto:lutheranchurchbrush@yahoo.com)

**Office Hours:**

Tues 11:30-1, Thurs 9-12

## January 5 Discussion

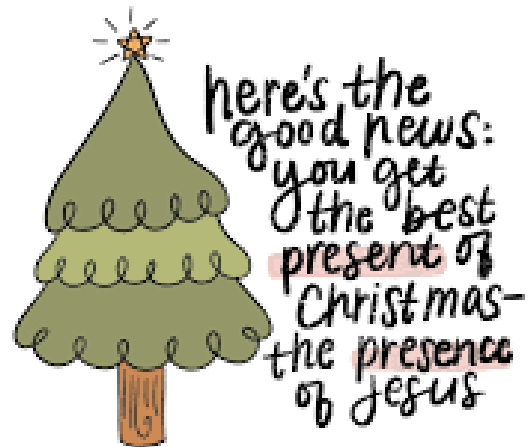
Prairie Parish Discussion and Charcuterie Potluck, Sunday, January 5!

Following worship we will gather in the fellowship hall for discussion and questions regarding Prairie Parish and the vote at Annual Meeting to re-structure into an area parish for pastoral leadership. Five congregations are considering re-structure of Prairie Parish to create a parish environment that will call two full-time pastoral leaders. The goal is to call two pastoral leaders to serve all five congregations and Eben Ezer Care Center who will contract for pastoral services. This re-structure is in consideration to provide rostered leader support after the retirement of Pr. Jeff Hanson, May 25, 2025 and the approaching retirement of Deacon Ro. Presently pastoral candidates are sparse, retirements high. Filling vacancies could easily take three to five years to fill. Previously, part-time pastoral candidates were successful solutions but now available part-time candidates have dwindled to almost non-existent. Pooling financial resources, lay ministry resources, and working together offers greater opportunity to attract and receive full-time rostered ministry leaders.

Be sure to join this discussion to learn about the possibilities before you cast your vote January 19 at the Annual Meeting. Light lunch potluck served immediately after discussion.

## Giving Tree...

This year everyone was very busy shopping for our gift tags hung on the Fellowship Tree for older adults living at Eben Ezer and children of Eben Ezer staff. From winter coats, to ladies' sweatsuits, to a men's hoodie, to hygiene products for both men and women, to adult coloring books, color pencils, and chocolate, to Legos, Hot Wheels, and tractors, the sleigh was full that made it's way to Eben Ezer December 22. Ten children and forty-one adults received a package of joy on Christmas morning from the compassionate hearts and hand hands of Bethlehem Lutheran. Thank you EVERYONE who shared in this project making special moments for those whose abundance came in one beautiful package!



Thank you to everyone who contributed to our little ladies' Christmas gifts.

Little Lily received *The Birth of Jesus: A Christmas Pop-Up Book*.

Kyla received *Lullaby for the King, the book*.

Nevaeh and Morgan received *The Animals Speak: A Christmas Eve Legend*, the book.

Sophia and Older Lily receive Willow Tree Angel Ornaments holding a candle, this their first year as acolytes.



## First Communion

We offer congratulations to Morgan Gardner receiving her first communion on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent, December 15 with mom and dad, Sandy and Kevin Gardner, kneeling on each side of her. We are so thankful for Morgan's spiritual growth and everyone's prayers for her nurture in the years to come.

*2024 Thankoffering  
donations total was*

**\$1,119.00!**

**BETHLEHEM  
Lutheran Church**

**BLC's Annual Meeting  
will take place on**

**Sunday,  
January 19th**

Annual Meeting, Sunday January 19... Immediately following worship the Annual Meeting will be held to celebrate the amazing ministries that have occurred during 2024 at Bethlehem Lutheran. We are truly thankful for the energy, efforts, and love of the Lord that has been shared with each other and the community this past year. Each and every ministry and gift given has been all for God's glory which we give our thanks and praise. This year's meeting continues to consider sharing ministries and outreach as we vote on the re-structure of Prairie Parish to further our ministry, growing and building by bringing rostered leaders to northern Colorado. Through collaborative effort and solid lay leaders we reach out to provide trained seminary leaders to our congregations in Sterling, Akron, and Brush, that can lead with support of lay leaders keeping Christ alive, our doors open, and hope for our communities on the northeastern plains.



This year our Advent Discovery was not only special on Tuesdays with our brothers and sisters at Rankin Presbyterian and Brush United Methodist Church; but here at Bethlehem on Sunday mornings. The Tuesday Soup and Study was shared Dec 3 with 27 in attendance for delicious soup at Bethlehem, then discussing artwork entitled “Favored One”; Dec 10 with 18 in attendance for delicious soup/chili at Rankin, then discussing artwork entitled “Binding Braids”; Dec 17 with 25 in attendance for delicious soup/chili at Brush United Methodist, then discussing artwork entitled “Full Life”.



Here at Bethlehem, Dec 1, “Ro’s Barnyard” was enjoyed learning where World Hunger animals

could be sent around the world. An extra treat was on Dec 22, Sophia shared her school project with the congregation at Come and Celebrate, entitled “Christmas in Costa Rica”.



December 8, during Come and Celebrate, the opportunity was provided for all ages to make a Christmas ornament for family, friends, or the tree at home. December 15, during Come and Celebrate, the singing together of

Christmas hymns was enjoyed by all. Lawrence Hansen was noted to not use a hymnal nor miss any word, no matter what verse we sang. December 22, all gifts for the Giving Tree were collected and the young ladies received their gifts and the gift of a Christmas quilt from the quilters! Our young ladies then offered their singing of “Away in the Manger” and “We Wish You a Merry Christmas” at All Saints Church “Festival of Lights.”



Advent Discovery truly was a preparation of hearts, hands, and spirits for the gift of

the Savior being born Christmas Eve. Sharing of hope, peace, joy and love came alive throughout the season not only with each other, but those outside our doors. As we welcomed



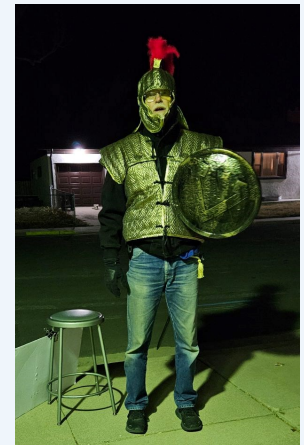
70 at the manger Christmas Eve, “Glory to God in the highest and peace to God’s people on earth” rang out from our lips, Christ was born in our hearts, and the light of His love twinkled in our eyes. Thanks be to God, for a most amazing Advent and Christmas season, yet dawning in us!



# LIVING NATIVITY



Saturday night, December 21, the little town of Bethlehem came alive on the sidewalks and grassy areas of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Twenty-five participants, an alpaca, little goat, chicken, angora rabbit, sheep, and donkey suddenly showed up under the wondrous star and lights of the night to welcome 50-60 people to experience that night Jesus was born. From the carpenter's bench to the merchants sharing samples of pomegranate and olives, bread and olive oil, to the band of angels flitting around the town, to the Magi and shepherds, Roman soldier taking census and tax collector collecting taxes, to the helper distributing dreidel toys and coins to pay taxes; it was a fun evening! Thanks to everyone who made it special and to everyone who dropped by to see!!!!



*"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33*

## Bethlehem Lutheran Christmas Tea 2024

The Christmas Tea was held on December 10, 2024 at 10am, here at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

We believe the Tea began in 1965 at the home of Jim and Sara Christensen at their Group Home for boys. Jim had the boys back then, to go to the church to get tables and chairs and help set up at their house. There are scrapbooks of pictures to view all the years. What a great tradition this has been. Once Sara passed away, the Tea was held at Bethlehem. The invitation has gone from being any church member over 60 to any and all adults from all area churches. We had over 35 people in attendance this year.



Deacon Ro Fesser led us in prayer to begin our program and bless the food.

Carol Heer played the piano for us and we sang, Deck The Halls, Joy To The World, Silent Night, This Little Light of Mine and We Wish you a Merry Christmas. Sharon George read a poem in between songs. They were Candles & Holly & Mistletoe, My Heart Returns To Bethlehem, On The Night That Christ Was Born and The Greatest Gift. We then did the Button Prayer, where everyone took a button and we prayed for different things that were represented by the button. Ro closed with prayers for everyone.

The guests enjoyed cookies, candy, sandwiches, veggie pizza, coffee, tea, lemonade or water.

Those providing the food were as follows:

Olive and Cheese Ribbon Sandwiches Lenore Wind

Veggie Pizza Carla Krueger

Toffee Janet Rhode

Gluten Free Cookies Sharon George

Cookies Donna Morgan

Cookies Deb Johnson

Cookies Trish Turner

Peanut Butter Fudge Carol Walker

Fudge and Peanut Brittle Terry Linker

Cookies Beth Hocheder

Cookies, bread and fruit Christmas trees Marsha Mills

Chex Mix and Cookies Carla Krueger



Donna Morgan, Janet Rhode, Marsha Mills, Deb Johnson, Trish Turner and Carla Krueger were the kitchen helpers.

Terresa Lauck, the church secretary, made the invitations and copied the music.

The next Tea will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in December of 2025 at the church.





Roxanne Swanson joined Bethlehem Lutheran by adult baptism at Sunday worship October 24, 2024, Roxanne lives in Fort Morgan and grew up attending Easy Side Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. We are thankful you are here!



### **BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING DECEMBER 8, 2024**

The meeting was brought to order by President Deb Johnson at 10:34am. Ro gave the opening prayer. Present were Deb, Terry Linker, Beth Hocheder, Kim Redden, Maren Bostrom, Ro, and Jeanette Dehning by Zoom. Absent were Charlene Holzworth and Issac Linker. Terry moved to accept the consensus agenda. Beth seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Brush Secondary Campus requests funds for Prom 2025. As in past years \$50 will be sent in January. EbenEzer also requested funds. Our annual gift of \$350 will be sent in January.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Advent and Christmas Eve: Deb will be purchasing the poinsettias, mostly silk. Real small for candles will be used on Christmas Eve. Children will sing Christmas Eve, and their will be congregational readers also.

Living Nativity will be December 21 from 5:30-7:30pm. There are enough people and animals to do this event.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Baptism and first communion materials have been ordered. Please hand the children communing the grape juice in the middle circle of the tray.

Ro suggested our white paraments have served their time. They are quite discolored. Ro will look into getting new ones with Memorial Committee funds.

A meeting will be held Sunday, January 5th to discuss joining Prairie Parish. **THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT EVENT TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF BLC!** Make sure you read everything about Prairie Parish below in these minutes.

*(continued on following page)*

*(Council Minutes continued from previous page)*

February 23, 2025 there will be no communion as Ro will be gone.. It was moved by Jeanette and 2nd by Maren to have Charlene, having been trained in sermon giving, and mentored by Ro, to do the service Motion passed.

January Deacon is Kim Redden. Usher will be Beth Hocheder. Council meeting will be January 12.

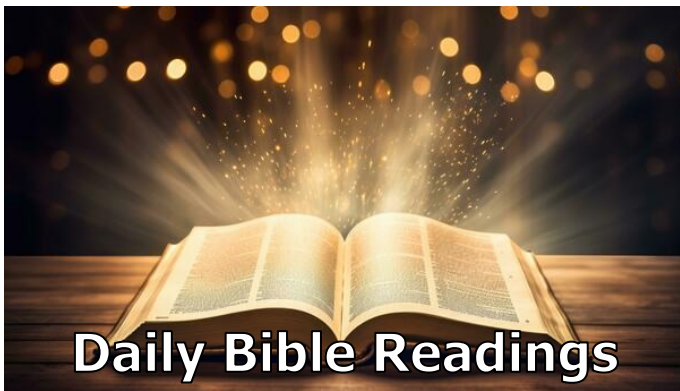
A Prairie Parish (PP) short report was given by Kim Redden. Ro greatly expanded on the details to which Kim spoke. **THIS IS CRITICAL INFORMATION FOR OUR FUTURE SO PLEASE READ CAREFULLY ASK QUESTIONS AND PRAYFULLY CONSIDER!!**

Iowa started a Prairie Parish over 25 years ago. The core values and commitment from this parish were used for the parish that has started here. Our synod is very excited about this nontraditional project. If we decide to go with PP, The East PP will be the two churches in Akron and one in Sterling. The West PP will be BLC, EbenEzer and All Saints. Rotation of the hopefully two pastors will be every 3, 6 or 12 months. BLC was told we may have to change times of service. But due to Kevin and Jodi not being able to start later than 9am that will be considered. The pastor would do most of the sermons each month, but the lay leaders who have been studying may do one Sunday a month. Both pastors, if hired, would be expected to be at each church's council meetings. A PP Advisory Board would be formed with two congregational members from each church. A call committee would soon be formed to hopefully call pastor(s) to begin in June 2025. Ro would help as one of the pastors if absolutely needed, but could step aside from BLC and PP in a year, or sooner but definitely by the end of 2027 if still with PP. Ro will be the rostered leader for Akron and Sterling beginning in June if a second pastor is not hired by then. This isn't a "yoke" like we were with LOCR. We need to think about the longevity of our congregation and what will be best for us going forward.

You can go to [oneinchristlutheranparish.org](http://oneinchristlutheranparish.org) to find out more about the program in Iowa. Each congregation would have its own vote. The Advisory Board has no vote. They make suggestions to the churches in PP. If one congregation votes no on an issue, it goes back to the Advisory Board. Ro would like us to vote at our Annual Meeting on January 23rd if to join PP as the call committee needs to be formed to hopefully call at least one pastor in May. This could be a building block for us and sharing of resources. We are an older congregation and need "new blood". The Synod has not been a lot of help to us in calling pastors lately, but they are very eager to help call for PP.

Maren moved and Terry seconded the meeting to adjourn at 12:41. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jeanette Dehning



## Daily Bible Readings

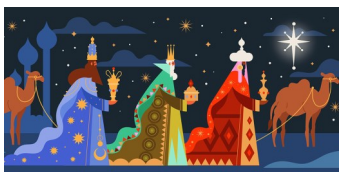
*Wednesday, January 1*  
 Numbers 6:22-27  
 Psalm 8  
 Galatians 4:4-7  
 Luke 2:15-21

*Thursday, January 2*  
 Psalm 147:12-20  
 Proverbs 1:1-7  
 James 3:13-18

*Friday, January 3*  
 Psalm 72  
 Job 42:10-17  
 Luke 8:16-21

*Saturday, January 4*  
 Psalm 72  
 Isaiah 6:1-5  
 Acts 7:44-53

*Sunday, January 5*  
 Psalm 72  
 Jeremiah 31:7-14  
 John 1:[1-9] 10-18  
*Monday, January 6*



*Epiphany of Our Lord*  
 Isaiah 60:1-6  
 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14  
 Ephesians 3:1-12  
 Matthew 2:1-12

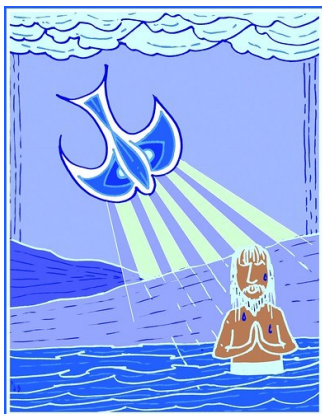
*Tuesday, January 7*  
 Psalm 72  
 Daniel 2:1-19  
 Ephesians 4:17—5:1

*Wednesday, January 8*  
 Psalm 72  
 Daniel 2:24-49  
 Ephesians 5:15-20

*Thursday, January 9*  
 Psalm 72  
 Numbers 24:15-19  
 Luke 1:67-79

*Friday, January 10*  
 Psalm 29  
 Ecclesiastes 2:1-11  
 1 Corinthians 2:1-10

*Saturday, January 11*  
 Psalm 29  
 Ecclesiastes 3:1-15  
 1 Corinthians 2:11-16



*Sunday, January 12*  
*Baptism of Our Lord*  
 Isaiah 43:1-7  
 Psalm 29  
 Acts 8:14-17  
 Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

*Monday, January 13*  
 Psalm 106:1-12  
 Judges 4:1-16  
 Ephesians 6:10-17

*Tuesday, January 14*  
 Psalm 106:1-12  
 Judges 5:12-21  
 1 John 5:13-21

*Wednesday, January 15*  
 Psalm 106:1-12  
 Numbers 27:1-11  
 Luke 11:33-36

*Thursday, January 16*  
 Psalm 36:5-10  
 Jeremiah 3:1-5  
 Acts 8:18-24

*Friday, January 17*  
 Psalm 36:5-10  
 Jeremiah 3:19-25  
 1 Corinthians 7:1-7

*Saturday, January 18*  
 Psalm 36:5-10  
 Jeremiah 4:1-4  
 Luke 11:14-23

*Sunday, January 19*  
 Isaiah 62:1-5  
 Psalm 36:5-10  
 1 Corinthians 12:1-11  
 John 2:1-11

*Monday, January 20*  
 Psalm 145  
 Isaiah 54:1-8  
 Romans 12:9-21

*Tuesday, January 21*  
 Psalm 145  
 Song of Solomon 4:1-8  
 1 Corinthians 1:3-17

*Wednesday, January 22*  
 Psalm 145  
 Song of Solomon 4:9—5:1  
 Luke 5:33-39

*Thursday, January 23*  
 Psalm 19  
 Isaiah 61:1-7  
 Romans 7:1-6

*Friday, January 24*  
 Psalm 19  
 Nehemiah 2:1-10  
 Romans 12:1-8

*Saturday, January 25*  
 Psalm 19  
 Nehemiah 5:1-13  
 Luke 2:39-52

*Sunday, January 26*  
 Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10  
 Psalm 19  
 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a  
 Luke 4:14-21

*Monday, January 27*  
 Psalm 119:89-96  
 Jeremiah 36:1-10  
 1 Corinthians 14:1-12

*Tuesday, January 28*  
 Psalm 119:89-96  
 Jeremiah 36:11-26  
 2 Corinthians 7:2-12

*Wednesday, January 29*  
 Psalm 119:89-96  
 Jeremiah 36:27-32  
 Luke 4:38-44

*Thursday, January 30*  
 Psalm 71:1-6  
 2 Chronicles 34:1-7  
 Acts 10:44-48

*Friday, January 31*  
 Psalm 71:1-6  
 2 Chronicles 35:20-27  
 Acts 19:1-10





Please pray for the following who have been submitted to our prayer list:

**The family of Bev Strand**

**Linda Neuburger**

**Charlene Holzworth**

**Ron Petersen**

**Garnet Leys**

**Amara Flaharty**

**Ken Kelly**

**Marilyn Woodward**

**Kenny Bostrom**

**John Strauch**

**Bev Strand**

**Beva Linker**

**Dave Honebein**

**Lori Bostrom**

# January Celebrations

## January Birthdays

Marsha Mills	2nd
Robbie Morgan	8th
Kevin Gardner	9th
Betty McCoy	9th
Nevaeh Alexander	18th
Isaac Linker	22nd
Don Hefty	24th
June Hanson	26th
Jena Radke	28th
Jeanette Dehning	29th

## January Anniversaries

Warren & Carol Walker	8th
Lawrence & June Hansen	24th



Do you or someone you know need prayers? Would you like us to pray for you or somebody dear to your heart? To add someone to the prayer chain let Rev. Deacon Ro know your request or email the church. If you are interested in being a PRAY-er, please email the church at [lutheranchurchbrush@yahoo.com](mailto:lutheranchurchbrush@yahoo.com).

## We thank those who offer their gifts in leading worship this month!

January 2025	5	12	19	26			
<b>Deacon</b>	Kim Redden						
<b>Reader</b>	Charlene Holzworth	Sharon George					
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Marisa Castrup						
<b>Communion Set UP</b>	Deacon Ro	Marisa Castrup	Deacon Ro	Marisa Castrup			
<b>Usher</b>	Beth Hocheder						
<b>Bell Ringer</b>	Kim Redden						
<b>Acolyte</b>	Lily Redden	Sophia Hamilton	Lily Redden	Sophia Hamilton			
<b>Clavinovist</b>	Garnet Leys						
<b>Media Team</b>	Kevin & Jody DeKorte						
	11/24	12/01	12/08	12/15	12/22	12/24	12/29
<b>Attendance</b>	33	31	36	32	40	70	29

### BLC Congregation Council Members & Officers

*Congregation Council is the core leadership body of the congregation, charged with overseeing and directing the life and mission of our church. We encourage you to talk with them! Please pray for their ministry as they provide leadership to BLC.*

Watch Sunday services on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/>

@BethlehemLutheranBrush



Like Bethlehem Lutheran Church On Facebook!

[www.facebook.com/bethlehemplutheranbrush](http://www.facebook.com/bethlehemplutheranbrush)

Deb Johnson, President  
 Terry Linker, Vice-President  
 Jeanette Dehning, Secretary  
 Kim Redden, Treasurer  
 Maren Bostrom  
 Pat Chase  
 Beth Hocheder  
 Charlene Holzworth  
 Isaac Linker



# January, 2025

# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Sun

Mon






Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

January				1	2	3	4
					9:00am Quilting		9:00am Prairie Parish BLC
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
2nd Sunday of Christmas 9:00am Worship 10:00am Future Ministry Meeting				9:00am Quilting		9:00am Bible Study	
12				16	17	18	
Baptism of Our Lord 9:00am Worship 10:15am Council Meet-				9:00am Quilting			
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
2nd Sunday after Epiphany 9:00am Worship 10:15am Annual Meeting	MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY I HAVE A DREAM	6:00pm PEO		9:00am Quilting			
26	27	28		30	31		
3rd Sunday after Epiphany 9:00am Worship 10:15am Annual Meeting				9:00am Quilting			

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

603 Custer Street  
Brush, CO 80723

Office: (970) 842-2246  
E-mail: [lutheranchurchbrush@yahoo.com](mailto:lutheranchurchbrush@yahoo.com)

Address Service Requested

A growing community of Christ's followers; cultivating disciples  
through compassion, love, and integrity.