



Bethlehem Star

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

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

With the beginning of March we breathe in the Holy Spirit and the peace of God that surpasses all understanding as we begin the season of Lent and we begin a new venture of forming and shaping the Prairie Parish as our pastoral leadership agent. With the season of Lent we journey forty days to reach the Three Days of Jesus’ death and resurrection, a journey of baptism into Christ. Our journey begins on Ash Wednesday, followed by walking through the wilderness in a return to a renewed closeness in relationship with our Lord and Savior. We get to celebrate God’s persistence with his mercy for us despite the stubborn obstacles and stumbling blocks throughout our journey. We are able to explore and dwell in the garden of resurrection.

All along the journey we will have many opportunities to share experiences in worship, fellowship and study with our brothers and sisters in Christ whether we join Rankin Presbyterian and Brush United Methodist Church Wednesdays at noon here in Brush or we join Prairie Parish congregations in Brush, Akron, and Sterling for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday services, or we join our congregation here at Bethlehem experiencing Sundays during Lent. I encourage and invite all of you to pick at least one experience in your Lenten

journey to be stretched beyond the Sunday experience to worship, share, or grow outside our Bethlehem doors. Opportunities will be available during the day, late afternoon/early evening, and evening hours for scheduling convenience. Be sure to check the schedule of opportunities available printed elsewhere in the newsletter and listed in each week’s bulletin.

This year’s Lenten mid-day Soup and Study experience will be held on Wednesdays rather than Tuesdays. The study topic will be “Thanksgiving for an Embodied God, Experiencing God through the Senses”. This is an interactive ELCA Lenten Midweek Series studying Sight, Sound, Scent, Touch, and Taste. A soup luncheon will be provided by the host congregation at noon beginning Wed, March 12 for five Wednesdays through April 9. Study will be led by the pastor of the host church beginning at 12:30pm, finishing study at 1:00 pm each Wednesday.

An amazing decision was made in January and February! Eighty-one people from four ELCA Lutheran churches on the northeastern plains voted on whether to re-structure Prairie Parish to become the pastoral leadership manager for all four congregations (All Saints Church at Eben Ezer, Bethlehem Lutheran, Peace Evangelical Lutheran at Akron, and Peace Lutheran at Sterling). Seventy-three voted yes with eight voting no. This decision extends an invitation to Akron United Methodist Church to become the fifth congregation in Prairie Parish. (Akron United Methodist Church has been

(continued on page 2)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church ~ 603 Custer ~ Brush, CO 80723

Rev. Deacon Ro Fesser
Cell: (970) 631-2715
lutheranchurchpastor@gmail.com
Office Hours:
Wednesday 10:00-noon,
Saturday noon-2, 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
Office Hours:
Thursdays 9:00am-12:00pm

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served by an ELCA rostered leader, Pastor Jeff Hanson for the last three years.) Additionally, Eben Ezer Lutheran Care Center has requested and made a financial commitment for weekly chaplain services from Prairie Parish. The ministry direction for Prairie Parish will be to combine lay leadership gifts, ministries, and financial resources that will sustain and support two full-time rostered leaders in healthy ministry, outreach, and faith development for the people of the northeastern plains. Please spend time reading and learning elsewhere in the newsletter about Prairie Parish NEXT STEPS and this amazing ministry opportunity, plan, and strategy, a first in the Rocky Mountain Synod.

Welcome everyone to quite a journey! A journey in personal faith and a journey as the body of Christ! Let us not forget the words of Paul in his letter to the Romans as we here the call, "All aboard":

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, who are called according to his purpose."

In Christ's love,
Ro



A special congregational meeting will be held Sunday, March 16, immediately following worship to elect a member to serve on the Prairie Parish Call Committee. A discussion will be held to clarify Prairie Parish gatherings no longer being held through June to allow Prairie Council to form and begin developing and recommending the organizing documents, synodical call, model of ministry, and organization of lay ministry teams. The congregation will need to elect a member for Prairie Council and elect Synod Assembly delegates in Albuquerque May 24-26.

March 16

Ash Wednesday March 5, 2025

All Saints Church, 9:30am

Brush United Methodist Church, 5:30pm

Rankin Presbyterian, 5:30pm

Akron United
Methodist
Church, 5:00pm

Peace Lutheran,
Sterling, 7:00pm



Ash
Wednesday

**"Thanksgiving for an Embodied God,
Experiencing God through the Senses!"**

Wednesdays at noon

March 12: Bethlehem Lutheran
"Sight"

March 19: Brush United Methodist Church
"Sound"

March 26: Rankin Presbyterian
"Scent"

April 2: Immanuel Congregational Church
"Touch"

April 9: At Bethlehem, All Saints Church hosting
"Taste"

Prairie Parish Next Steps...

Prairie Parish begins formation and organization Saturday, March 1 at Peace Evangelical Church in Akron with two elected/appointed representatives from each congregation meeting to form the Prairie Council. Prairie Council will work in an Advisory capacity only sorting through, developing operating procedures/plans then making recommendations to Congregational Council for approval. The only decision-making Prairie Council will have will be for its own order to work efficiently and effectively, such as meeting times and dates, whether in-person or by zoom, selecting a chairman and secretary which will all be by consensus rather than motions and vote.

Pr. Jeff Hanson and Deacon Ro did meet with Bishop Meghan and Synod Minister for Rostered Leaders and Lay Leadership, Pr. Diana Linden-Johnson, and Jon Johnson, Finance Director on Tuesday, February 18. Discussion was focused on forming Prairie Parish as a separate entity and identity from the congregations with its own tax ID number and Federal ID number versus using one of the congregations as the entity. Even though it will take a bit longer to get Colorado and Federal numbers, this is the recommended direction. The Synod Office was contacting the Synod Attorney to confirm this being the recommended direction, especially with another denomination being included in the Parish. In regards, to the Methodist-Lutheran collaboration was not an ELCA concern nor Synod concern as the Synod already has these collaborations already successfully in place. A recommendation was made by the Synod to hold a Parish Annual Meeting with congregations and voting delegates to approve the Parish budget, review the Parish model with rostered leaders, and to celebrate the ministries together rather than each Congregational Council approving the annual budget. A final recommendation made was rostered leader calls become synodical calls approved by Synod Council rather than one congregation in the Parish being the calling congregation.

Synod Office did recommend each congregation elect a call committee member separate from their Prairie Council representatives, but did okay in cases where it is difficult to get that third person, a Prairie Council representative may serve on the call committee. The Call Committee will consist of one member from each congregation who will construct and write the Ministry Site Profile for Prairie Parish, which will provide information from all three communities: Brush, Akron, and Sterling. Our call committee may be formed and actively working as soon as the

congregations select, elect/appoint their member. The call search will first be for a full-time rostered leader, unless a clergy couple shows interest. If that scenario arises, the call committee will be talking with both candidates at the same time.

At the March 1 meeting our Prairie Council will begin their work by getting to know each other, understand their purpose, determine their terms of service, select their regular meeting times and whether they will be in-person, zoom, or a combination. They will select a chairman and a secretary; then begin working on the job description/experience for Prairie Parish Treasurer (this will have time to develop as Prairie Parish Treasurer will not begin serving until call committee has made a recommendation to the congregational councils.) Prairie Council will hear the pluses/minuses of a synodical call vs one congregation; followed by writing final drafts to the commitment statements (purpose and direction) and core values (how we accomplish, what we believe) for the founding documents and congregation council approvals.

And finally, with joy and excitement we have three potential ministry candidates from Sterling who have entered discernment in the last three weeks to consider training and call to serve Prairie Parish. All three candidates participated in the Prairie Parish Lay Leader trainings. Pr. Jeff and I walk alongside these potential candidates and connect Synod Office to assure the discernment process and potential ministry callings are fully explored and considered for seminary, scholarship funding, and candidacy acceptance.

As you read all about these next steps; it may be overwhelming, seeming like a mountain of work. Much of the work is drafted only needing names, times, dates. Rough drafts have been created of the commitment statements and core values at the Prairie Parish Gathering over the last six months, so final drafts are not impossible. The Holy Spirit has been moving for almost a year, since April 2024. Our prayer teams actively praying, lay leaders passionately training, and possibilities being dreamed with God's love and His will. We go forward loving and serving! In trust, faith, and hope we need everyone's prayers asking that God's will be accomplished, the Holy Spirit continue to lead and guide the Prairie Council and Call Committee and those who will come to serve the people of Prairie Parish, even though we don't know them now, be led in their discernment for our northeastern plains. We give thanks for God's hand in this ministry and the creative work He is doing right here among us!

Prairie Parish Lay Leader Training

Prairie Parish Worship Planning and Leadership Training is finishing up. Kim Redden and Sandy Gardner have actively participated. Sandy is planning a worship for June, 2025 and Kim will be assigned a Sunday to plan when she returns from Viet Nam. The plan is to form worship planning teams that will compare notes and work together making Sunday worship plans for Sunday bulletins.

Soon we will be connecting our lay preachers to forming a text study time once a week to discuss and share ideas about their study and preparations for the Sundays they will be preaching. Deacon Ro or Pr. Jeff will join them in these discussions.

A second Visitation Training led by Deacon Ro will be offered beginning March 18, 25, and April 1. The training will be held three consecutive Tuesdays from 7:00-8:00pm on Zoom. Many were unable to attend in December because of holiday commitments, so we offer a second training for those who missed out on the difference of sharing a Spiritual visit vs. a Social visit and how to do that visit! Everyone is welcome to participate. Please give your name and email address to Deacon Ro if you want to participate.

Our Prairie Parish training, "Bible Studies, Leading and Teaching" will begin in April. Be watching for the schedule with all conducted on Zoom. Pr. Jeff and Deacon Ro will share in the training, with possibly a guest trainer.

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE

Be sure to provide the church office with your address, present phone number, and email in the next week. Terresa almost has the new directory ready for print. Be sure to help out by confirming your contact information filling out a lavender slip and leaving it in the office.

2025 Council Retreat will be Saturday, March 22. Breakfast served at 8:30am

Retreat begins at 9:00am. In 2023 Council Retreat was "Classic Church Becoming". In 2024 Council Retreat was "Constitution". This year Pr. Jeff Hanson will present "Marks of Discipleship". A zoom connection will be available for Jeanette to join us.



The Season of Lent....

Forty days and the five Sundays during these forty days make up the season of Lent, a journey that God established from the beginning. “We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation.” (*the invitation to Lent from ELW Leaders Edition, p 617*). The journey is traveled in a way that “contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from the love of God and neighbor.” Lent is “our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus’ death and resurrection, the core of our faith and belief, our baptism into Christ. Many around the world prepare and study during Lent for their Easter vigil baptism. Lent offers a time for reflection, prayer, and renewal for those in preparation, but also the opportunity for all of us baptized believers to renew and return in our commitment to love and serve God, to love and serve others. As Jesus walked through the wilderness forty days preparing for his ministry, we walk through Lent forty days examining our hearts, minds, and spirits as called followers continuing the ministry.

The season of Lent begins this Wednesday, March 5 with Ash Wednesday. You will have a variety of opportunities to attend Ash Wednesday services on this day.

All Saints Church, March 5, 9:30am

Brush United Methodist Church, March 5, 5:30pm

Rankin Presbyterian, March 5, 5:30pm

Akron United Methodist Church, March 5, 5:00pm

Peace Lutheran, Sterling, March 5, 7:00pm

Ash Wednesday is a time of solemn prayer that kicks off the season of Lent. On this day we confess our sin with a litany of repentance and receive the sign of ashes. This ancient symbol of repentance reminds us of our mortality. Returning to God’s mercy and grace, marked with the cross of Christ, we make our way through Lent, longing for the baptismal waters of Easter, our spiritual rebirth. The ashes we receive on Wednesday come from the palms we waved last year on Palm Sunday, mixed with oil, reminded of the anointing we received in our baptisms.

Lenten Soup and Study begins Wednesday, March 12 at noon right here at Bethlehem welcoming our brothers and sisters from Brush United Methodist, Rankin Presbyterian, Immanuel Congregational Church, and All Saints Church. In past years Soup and Study was held on Tuesdays. Please note the change to WEDNESDAYS!

This year’s theme is: “Thanksgiving for an Embodied God, Experiencing God through the Senses!”

Wednesday, March 12: Bethlehem Lutheran “Sight”

Wednesday, March 19: Brush United Methodist Church “Sound”

Wednesday, March 26: Rankin Presbyterian “Scent”

Wednesday, April 2: Immanuel Congregational Church “Touch”

Wednesday, April 9: At Bethlehem, All Saints Church, hosting “Taste”

We will need three volunteers to each bring a pot of soup for March 12. We generally have between 25-35 healthy eaters who love soup for lunch. The more kinds of soup, the better. Deacon Ro will provide a pot of soup and assorted breads.

I encourage everyone to select at least one opportunity outside Sunday worship as your Lenten discipline this year to see just how you and God experience each other in a new and different way.

Lent, the season of fasting, prayer, serving others, and renewal of self. I wonder just what might be revealed!





This month we celebrate March
Baptismal birthdays!

Pat Chase	March, 1948
Kadie Foiles	March 11, 2001
Charlene Holzworth	March 29, 1953
Sandy Gardner	March 30, 2002
Brooke Trimbaugh	March 11, 2001
Allyn Wind	March 28, 1937
Janet Rohde	March 28, 1948
Betty McCoy	March 27, 1988
Beva Linker	March 17, 1940
Todd Morgan,	January 1952

Blessed baptismal birthdays to
everyone in the name of Father, Son
and Holy Spirit!

**Note: Some of our Baptismal records
are incomplete. Please help us update
our baptismal records if we have
incorrect, incomplete, or no record at all.*

March Celebrations

March Birthdays

Kyla Alexander	1st
Lenore Wind	3rd
Jaylene Evans	8th
Bill George	14th
Krystal Ginther	18th
Donna Morgan	21st
Larry Anderson	26th

March Anniversaries

John & Wendy Richter	10th
Ed & Barb Brandenburg	30th





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

Roxanne Swanson

Ron Peterson

Garnet Leys

Amara Flaharty

Ken Kelly

Marilyn Woodward

Kenny Bostrom

John Strauch

Beva Linker

Dave Honebein

Lori Bostrom



Food & Hygiene Item Collection for Community Cupboard

Way to go everyone!!! We kicked off 2025 with 84 pounds of food and hygiene items!!! In 2024 our first quarter of giving yielded 74 pounds. What a great start!! A big thank you to everyone who contributed and touched someone's life, making a difference for them and their family!!!!

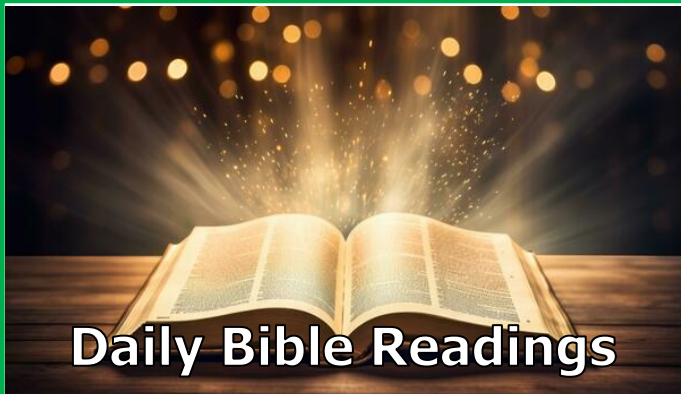
84
pounds



Daylight Savings Time Starts

March 9, 2025

Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour Saturday, March 8th in the evening or Sunday morning, March 9th.



Daily Bible Readings

Saturday, March 1
Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15
Isaiah 30:8-17
John 16:1-4a

Sunday, March 2
Isaiah 55:10-13
Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15
1 Corinthians 15:51-58
Luke 6:39-49

Monday, March 3
Psalm 1
Jeremiah 24:1-10
1 Corinthians 16:1-12

Tuesday, March 4
Psalm 1
Jeremiah 29:10-19
1 Corinthians 16:13-24



Wednesday, March 5
Psalm 1
Proverbs 5:1-23
Luke 14:34-35

Thursday, March 6
Psalm 99
Deuteronomy 9:1-5
Acts 3:11-16

Friday, March 7
Psalm 99
Deuteronomy 9:6-14
Acts 10:1-8

Saturday, March 8
Psalm 99
Deuteronomy 9:15-24
Luke 10:21-24



Sunday, March 9
Exodus 34:29-35
Psalm 99
2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2
Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a]

Monday, March 10
Psalm 35:11-28
Exodus 35:1-29
Acts 10:9-23a

Tuesday, March 11
Psalm 35:11-28
Ezekiel 1:1—2:1
Acts 10:23b-33

Wednesday, March 12
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Thursday, March 13
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
Exodus 5:10-23
Acts 7:30-34

Friday, March 14
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
Exodus 6:1-13
Acts 7:35-42

Saturday, March 15
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8
John 12:27-36



Sunday, March 16
Deuteronomy 26:1-11
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
Romans 10:8b-13
Luke 4:1-13

Monday, March 17
Psalm 17
1 Chronicles 21:1-17
1 John 2:1-6

Tuesday, March 18
Psalm 17
Zechariah 3:1-10
2 Peter 2:4-21

Wednesday, March 19
Psalm 17
Job 1:1-22
Luke 21:34—22:6

Thursday, March 20
Psalm 27
Genesis 13:1-7, 14-18
Philippians 3:2-12

Friday, March 21
Psalm 27
Genesis 14:17-24
Philippians 3:17-20

Saturday, March 22
Psalm 27
Psalm 118:26-29
Matthew 23:37-39



Sunday, March 23
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18
Psalm 27
Philippians 3:17—4:1
Luke 13:31-35

Monday, March 24
Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41]
42
Exodus 33:1-6
Romans 4:1-12

Tuesday, March 25
Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41]
42
Numbers 14:10b-24
1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Wednesday, March 26
Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41]
42
2 Chronicles 20:1-22
Luke 13:22-31

Thursday, March 27
Psalm 63:1-8
Daniel 3:19-30
Revelation 2:8-11

Friday, March 28
Psalm 63:1-8
Daniel 12:1-4
Revelation 3:1-6

Saturday, March 29
Psalm 63:1-8
Isaiah 5:1-7
Luke 6:43-45



Sunday, March 30
Isaiah 55:1-9
Psalm 63:1-8
1 Corinthians 10:1-13
Luke 13:1-9

Monday, March 31
Psalm 39
Jeremiah 11:1-17
Romans 2:1-11

BLC Church Council Meeting February 9, 2025

The meeting was called to order by President Pat Chase at 10:25 am. Ro gave the opening prayer. Members absent were Terry Linker and Charlene Holzworth. Present were Pat, Maren, Kevin, Beth, Todd, and Jeanette by Zoom.

Minutes from the last meeting, treasurer's report, and Deacon Ro's report were accepted as presented.

Correspondence was received from Lily for accepting her and welcoming her into our congregation. She also thanked us for all the gifts she has received. There was also a thank you from the Kuwaa Mission. They received \$416.25 from the money collected at Come and Celebrate in 2024.

OLD BUSINESS

A report on Prairie Parish (PP) was given by Ro. A structure format has been made for us and the Synod. It includes pastoral leadership or a lay leader at each church every Sunday. The PP Council will be composed of two members from each congregation. They will make recommendations, but all decisions will be made by the churches. Each pastor selected will have their salary, benefits, housing, and conferences paid by the congregations. Each congregation will pay 4%, plus another amount based on their communicate members. BLC and Peace Sterling have the largest congregations so will get the bulk of the services. A PP Call Committee will be made up of members of the PP Council, with one from each congregation. Kevin has agreed to be one person from BLC. Another needs to be chosen. Ro will announce this at church next Sunday and council members will seek out any interested parties.

NEW BUSINESS

David Wood has transferred his membership from LCOR to BLC. Motion by Beth to accept this transfer was passed.

Sofia was given instruction and received her first communion. Kevin moved to accept Sofia as a member of BLC. Motion passed.

A council retreat will be held March 22 from 8:30 to 11am. Breakfast will be provided. Confidentiality was discussed. Ro will prepare a release form. The person themselves will need to make the request and sign the document. If that person cannot express that request, a family member must talk with Ro. First names only will be used.

OTHER BUSINESS

All council members need keys to the church. Kevin will be given a key.

There is no deacon for March yet. Beth is the usher.

Next council meeting is March 9 at 10:15am.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:17am with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeanette

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

March, 2025	2	9	16	23	30
Deacon	Beth Hocheder				
Reader	Jeanne Wuest	Kevin Gardner	Maren Bostrom	Charlene Holzworth	Sharon George
Altar Guild	Marisa Castrup				
Communion Set Up	Deacon Ro & Sandy Gardner	Marisa Castrup	Deacon Ro & Sandy Gardner	Marisa Castrup	Deacon Ro & Sandy Gardner
Usher	Beth Hocheder				
Bell Ringer	Larry Johnson	Kim Redden	Sandy Gardner	Maren Bostrom	Sandy Gardner
Acolyte	Sophia Hamilton	Lily Redden	Sophia Hamilton	Lily Redden	Sophia Hamilton
Clavinovist	Garnet Leys				
Media Team	Kevin & Jody DeKorte				

	2/02	2/09	2/16	2/23
Attendance	31	31	31	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!





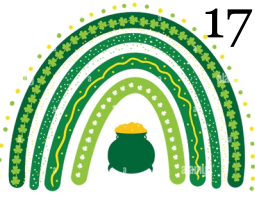

www.facebook.com/bethlehemplutheranbrush

Pat Chase, President
 Terry Linker, Vice-President
 Jeanette Dehning, Secretary
 Kim Redden, Treasurer
 Maren Bostrom
 Kevin Gardner
 Beth Hocheder
 Charlene Holzworth
 Todd Morgan



March 2025

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Transfiguration of Our Lord 9:00am Worship	3	4	5  Ash Wednesday	6 9:00am Quilting	7	8
9  1st Sunday in Lent 9:00am Worship 10:15am Council Meeting	10	11  SEEKING GOD'S WAY	12 12:00pm Lenten Soup Study at Bethlehem Lutheran Church	13 9:00am Quilting	14	15  Lent
16 2nd Sunday in Lent 9:00am Worship 10:00am Special Congregation Meeting	17  HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18 6:00pm PEO 7:00pm Visitation Training (Zoom)	19 12:00pm Lenten Soup Study at Brush United Methodist Church	20 Terresa gone 9:00am Quilting	21	22 8:30am-11:00am Council Retreat
23 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:00am Worship	24	25 7:00pm Visitation Training (Zoom)	26 12:00pm Lenten Soup Study at Rankin	27 9:00am Quilting	28	29
30 4th Sunday in Lent 9:00am Worship	31					1 9:00am Prairie Parish Council Peace Evangelical Church, Akron

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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Address Service Requested

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