



Bethlehem Star

Bethlehem Lutheran Church | Evangelical Lutheran Church of America | July, 2022

Following in the Footsteps of Jesus!
April 19-27, 2022

It wasn't just experiencing Holy Week this year hearing the story...it actually was walking the story where it happened! Leaving Easter afternoon, the adventure was on; seeing, stepping on, hearing the sights, places and sounds that Jesus once saw and heard in a land he walked, talked and had his being.

From Chicago to Istanbul to Tel Aviv to Tiberius, roughly 5650 miles, 13 hours of flying, a blue temporary visa card, a CO-Vid test, an armband, and a 2.5-hour bus ride at 12:30 am, I was there! I was on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius, in Galilee, where Jesus grew up from boy to man, called the twelve, where he preached, healed the sick, drove out demons, taught the Way, fed the 5,000, walked on water, filled the fishing nets and invited Peter to feed His sheep. I too, boated early morning on the Sea, ate fish, wondered in Nazareth if Jesus ran down the same street I saw a boy riding his bike, listened to the water lapping on the shore where Jesus and the twelve ate breakfast around the charcoal fire, felt the breeze on my face sitting in the shade at the synagogue in Capernaum, and stood in Peter's mother-in-law's home where maybe she stood serving after Jesus healed her from her fever.

I was there sitting with Father

Chacour, a Palestinian Christian, forced from his home in Ramalah at age 7 in 1948 by the Zionist (Israeli) government, still hoping and waiting to return at age 86 before he dies. A former Archbishop of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, renowned world-wide, a founder of the first high school and junior college that welcomed Palestinians, Muslims, Christians, Jews; now, still persecuted, retained, and restricted from his boyhood home as Palestinian and as Christian.

I was there in Shiloh at Jacob's well where Jacob met his cousin, Rachel, helping her water her sheep and a few hundred years later, Jesus sat with the Samaritan women, offering her the living water. I drank the water, still crystal clear, the best tasting water I've ever tasted, roughly 493 feet deep, cranked up crystal clear in the stainless-steel bucket.

(continued on pages 2 & 3)

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Office Hours

Tuesdays & Thursdays 9am - 3pm
Administrative Assistant Teresa Lauck

Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. Worship Service

I was there walking in the streets of Bethlehem; in the cave those sheep were that night the angels sang. Yes, I sang “Angels We Have Heard on High” with our group in the church outside the cave. I also heard the Muslim prayer chant on the loud-speakers 5 times a day, with Ramadan in its’ 16th day of the 30 days of fasting. I knelt and placed my hand in the space where Mary laid Jesus in the manger and pondered all these things in her heart.

I stood overlooking Jerusalem as Jesus must have looked at it, riding the donkey down the hill from Bethany on that Palm Sunday with the crowds shouting Hosanna, waving palms! I stood at the rocks he knelt on praying that night in Gethsemane tears in my eyes as mass was starting in the church; then looked across at the Golden Gates of Jerusalem where he saw Judas coming with authorities carrying torches. I entered the Lion’s Gate into Old Jerusalem, stopping at the pools of Bethesda, where he healed the paralytic, also the site of his grandmother, Anne’s home, Mary’s mother. Never really thought about Jesus having a grandmother to spoil him.

I walked the grounds and prayed in our Lutheran church at the Lutheran Augusta Victoria Hospital, the only hospital that will treat Palestinians if they can get there, through the checkpoints and security checks. With no emergency room, at the hospital they treat the conditions and illnesses as they can. Jill Biden just raised and gifted \$300,000 for cancer treatment after she and President Biden’s visit late last year.

I walked the Via Dolorosa, that 5 mile walk from Pilate’s small courtyard where Barabbas was released, to Calvary

and crucifixion, the stone Jesus was laid upon and gently washed before being carried to the tomb. And yes, I knelt in that second chamber and touched the stone where he was laid, but rose up from the dead! Alleluia!

I stood where the disciples bathed and put on clean clothes before the Passover meal; then went to the Upper Room, hearing John’s description “on the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread, gave thanks... “I stood in High Priest Caiaphas’ house, outside Jerusalem; in the dungeon below where Jesus was held overnight with other Jewish wrong-doers. I stood looking out over the rugged hill to that house where Jesus was drug along in chains and shackles. I stood outside Stephen’s Gate (Lion’s Gate) into Old Jerusalem where Stephen was stoned.

I ate dinner with Bishop Azar, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land, learning the holy sites were closed to Christians on Orthodox Easter, the very next day. I heard about the persecution and oppression of the Palestinian people; more land being taken away by the Israeli government as they build the 17-foot wall, no health care, no education, and water shut-offs for all Palestinians. I saw the water tanks on the rooftops of all Palestinian homes attempting to store water for when water is shut off. I heard and saw how there are only 20,000 Christians living in Jerusalem while large Jewish settlements (4,000 to 60,000 family units) continue to be built on Palestinian East Jerusalem land, with incentives for Jews to move in with amenities and free living for three years. I visited the Lutheran Church Offices, and our Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

just blocks from the Holy Sepulcher (Crucifixion and Tomb) in old Jerusalem where services are held for English-speaking Christians.

I stood in Jerico, yes where those walls came tumbling down when the Israelites marched around the city with Joshua. I looked at the caves of Qumran where the Dead Sea scrolls were found by the shepherd. I ate traditional Orthodox Easter dinner: lamb meatballs on cinnamon sticks, potatoes and carrots, roasted chicken, pickled vegetables, figs, dates, humus, tomatoes and cucumbers, slaw, pita bread, Easter cookies (shaped in crowns and palm leaves).

I shared and celebrated Holy Communion at the Jordan River, then stood with our group in the river, affirming and offering thanksgiving for our baptism. I floated in the Dead Sea; yes it picks you up and floats you without any effort on your part! And I looked up at the Mount of Temptation where Jesus refused Satan to throw himself off for all the kingdoms in the world! I rode to Tel Aviv for our return flight on the Damascus Road, an old Roman road that the caravans traveled for trade from Turkey to Egypt; Yes that same road Joseph was sold to the caravan by his jealous brothers then

taken into Egypt. The same road Joseph and Mary would have been traveling with a caravan when 12-year-old Jesus was left behind in the temple in Jerusalem. Caravans were the safest travel in the day.

It was a trip, but much, much more than a trip. Many say it is a pilgrimage. I have yet to find just the right words to describe, explain, or name the week that was, in my faith life. I know I am different. I know I hear and reflect on Scripture very differently. I know I think about and pray for Palestinian Christians, my brothers and sisters in Christ, quite differently. I know I preach differently, and I KNOW my Lord and Savior Jesus, very differently. I feel the Holy Spirit moving in me differently and I think about God and His story of loving you and I, differently.

I have had a moment in that story that unfolds, unleashes, and sets free my heart, mind, and spirit to be even more grace-filled, faith-full, alive in thanks, joy, and peace! Thank you for being my brothers and sisters in Christ, for taking time to travel with me and share in this good news of Jesus Christ, the love of your Father in heaven, and the wisdom of that story opened to us through the Holy Spirit!



Prairie Parish Event

Saturday, July 9th

9:00 am

Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer

JOIN US FOR A

MEET

&

GREET

with

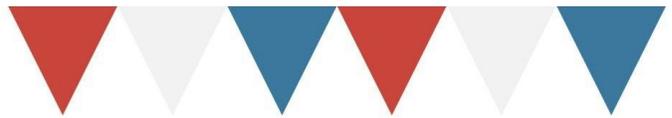
Pastor

Brenda

Pfeifly

YOU'RE INVITED!

All are welcome to attend a meet and greet on **Friday, July 8th at 5:30 p.m.** here at Bethlehem Church. Dinner will be provided. Hope to see you all there!



Happy Birthday



July Birthdays

June Hansen	3rd
Charlene Holzworth	6th
Stan Krueger	11th
Zach Redden	11th
David Strand	15th
Zachary Lee Redden II	25th
Chester McCoy	27th



JULY ANNIVERSARIES

July Anniversary

Charles & Rosa Guzman-Alexander	2nd
Chester & Betty McCoy	20th

**Please let the office know if there is an error or if we have missed anyone.*



Daily Bible Readings

Friday, July 1

Psalm 66:1-9
Jeremiah 51:47-58
2 Corinthians 8:1-7

Saturday, July 2

Psalm 66:1-9
Zechariah 14:10-21
Luke 9:1-6

Sunday, July 3

Isaiah 66:10-14
Psalm 66:1-9
Galatians 6: [1-6] 7-16
Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Monday, July 4

Psalm 119:73-80
Jeremiah 6:10-19
Acts 19:21-27

Tuesday, July 5

Psalm 119:73-80
Jeremiah 8:4-13
Acts 19:28-41

Wednesday, July 6

Psalm 119:73-80
Joshua 23:1-16
Luke 10:13-16

Thursday, July 7

Psalm 25:1-10
Genesis 41:14-36
James 2:14-26

Friday, July 8

Psalm 25:1-10
Genesis 41:37-49
Acts 7:9-16

Saturday, July 9

Psalm 25:1-10
Leviticus 19:1-4, 32-37
John 3:16-21

Sunday, July 10

Deuteronomy 30:9-14
Psalm 25:1-10
Colossians 1:1-14
Luke 10:25-37



Monday, July 11

Psalm 25:11-20
Job 24:1-8
James 2:1-7

Tuesday, July 12

Psalm 25:11-20
Proverbs 19:1-17
1 John 3:11-17

Wednesday, July 13

Psalm 25:11-20
Ecclesiastes 9:13-18
Matthew 25:31-46

Thursday, July 14

Psalm 15
Genesis 12:10-20
Hebrews 5:1-6

Friday, July 15

Psalm 15
Genesis 13:1-18
Ephesians 3:14-21

Saturday, July 16

Psalm 15
Genesis 14:1-16
Luke 8:4-10

Sunday, July 17

Genesis 18:1-10a
Psalm 15
Colossians 1:15-28
Luke 10:38-42

Monday, July 18

Psalm 119:97-104
Exodus 18:1-12
Colossians 1:27—2:7

Tuesday, July 19

Psalm 119:97-104
Proverbs 9:1-18
1 John 2:1-6

Wednesday, July 20

Psalm 119:97-104
Deuteronomy 12:1-12
John 6:41-51

Thursday, July 21

Psalm 138
Esther 2:19—3:6
Acts 1:15-20

Friday, July 22

Psalm 138
Esther 3:7-15
Acts 2:22-36

Saturday, July 23

Psalm 138
Esther 4:1-17
Luke 8:22-25

Sunday, July 24

Genesis 18:20-32
Psalm 138
Colossians 2:6-15 [16-19]
Luke 11:1-13

Monday, July 25

Psalm 55:16-23
Esther 5:1-14
Colossians 2:16—3:1

Tuesday, July 26

Psalm 55:16-23
Esther 6:1—7:6
Romans 9:30—10:4

Wednesday, July 27

Psalm 55:16-23
Esther 7:7—8:17
Matthew 5:43-48

Thursday, July 28

Psalm 49:1-12
Proverbs 23:1-11
Romans 11:33-36

Friday, July 29

Psalm 49:1-12
Proverbs 24:1-12
Ephesians 4:17-24

Saturday, July 30

Psalm 49:1-12
Ecclesiastes 1:1-11
Mark 10:17-22

Sunday, July 31

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14;
2:18-23
Psalm 49:1-12
Colossians 3:1-11
Luke 12:13-21



Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes

June 7, 2022

Present: Council members Todd Morgan, Pat Chase, Kevin and Jody DeKorte, Beth Hocheder, Marissa Castrup, and Kim Redden Absent: Marsha Mills

Present: Call Committee members: Steve Rohde, Shirley Schilling, Jim Christensen and Pat Chase

The Call Committee previously met with the Council to discuss the pastoral candidate as well as a financial package commensurate with Bethlehem's finances. The call was extended to the candidate and she responded with a counter proposal. Consequently, the Council and Call Committee met to discuss the counter proposal. There was discussion about Bethlehem's need for a pastor, the scarcity of candidates and the decline in Bethlehem's membership, partially because we have not had the stability of one pastor.

The financial package we offered at a cash salary of \$36,000 was countered with a cash salary of \$42,000 for a $\frac{3}{4}$ time pastor, which would allow her to have another part-time job to compensate for lack of money paid by Bethlehem. The candidate's counter offer to be our pastor, noted she would be taking a substantial decrease in salary compared to what she is currently earning for her thirty-three years of experience, especially considering the Synod's guidelines for a salary commensurate with her experience.

Discussed:

Total financial package to have this candidate includes the same benefits always afforded our pastors, such as a parsonage, insurance, retirement, continuing education, ...

How Bethlehem would/could meet these financial obligations that current income is not sufficient

What options do we have:

Continue having fill in pastors, not have the benefit of other pastoral duties and hope membership does not continue to decline

Accepting the call response proposal and ask the congregation to give more to meet the deficit

Accepting the call response and use Bethlehem's monetary resources in savings to meet the deficit

Result of using resources

Run out of money

Having faith that the stability of a pastor who prefers rural communities, thinks home visits are important and has experience reaching out in the community to grow membership will result in more members and more income

Not accepting the call response

Result of not accepting the call response and not using savings resources

Wait for another candidate, possibly 2-3 years and hope membership does not decline

Declining membership and lack of income from lost members

Having to close the doors at Bethlehem and lose our savings/ checking / investment resources to the synod because we no longer have a church

The council voted 7 to 2 to accept the call response of the candidate; use saving resources to meet the deficit, ask the congregation to increase giving to help meet the deficit and have FAITH this decision is in the best interest of Bethlehem, have FAITH God will continue to lead us in future decisions and endeavors, have FAITH Bethlehem's members will support these efforts to have financial and membership stability and participate in helping Bethlehem to grow a positive future

Attached is a look at the monetary situation we face and discussed at this joint meeting

Bethlehem Lutheran Congregational Meeting

June 9, 2022

The council meeting for this date was cancelled because council and call committee had met on June 7, 2022 and there was nothing else for the agenda for this month.

Council members agreed at the joint meeting to electronically approve the minutes for May and electronically approve the financials for May.

A motion was made electronically to approve the financial report for May 12, 2022 as presented electronically. Motion passed

A motion was made electronically to approve the secretary's report as presented. Motion passed

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Chase, Secretary



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

Beva Linker, Sharon Bzdek, Chet McCoy, Shawn Halvorson, Marian Greenway, Lori Bostron, Chris Brinkopf, Collene Travers, and Esther Wyatt.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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Address Service Requested

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

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

July 2022	3	10	17	24	31
Deacon	Larry Johnson				
Reader	Kim Redden	Lenore Wind	Deb Johnson	Sharon George	Jeanne Wuest
Altar Guild	Jeanette Dehning				
Usher	Steve Rohde				
Sunshine Committee	Jeanette Dehning				
Clavinovist	Garnet Leys				
Pastor	Sonja Pancoast	Dan Bollman	Dan Bollman	Dan Bollman	Vicky Daub

	5/29	6/05	6/12	6/19	6/26
Attendance	18	22	23	21	34

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.

- Todd Morgan, President 842-2596
- Marsha Mills, Vice-President 768-1562
- Pat Chase, Secretary 768-7665
- Kim Redden, Treasurer 380-9727
- Marisa Castrup (303) 502-7459
- Jody DeKorte 867-2238
- Kevin DeKorte 867-2238
- Beth Hocheder 768-3888
- Deb Johnson 842-5633



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Bethlehem Lutheran Church