

Bethlehem Star

A Message from Pastor Gary

"...if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Matthew 18: 19-20

On Tuesday evening, July 8, while visiting congregations in the Naberera Parish, Pat, Karen, and I had the most amazing opportunity to worship in a traditional Maasai village. We gathered in the dark, under a brilliant star lit sky that pulsed with the ancient energy of the universe. Pulsing with modern energy were the children who sang and jumped to the rhythm of their songs, which praised God for the magnificent grace shown to us in Christ Jesus. While sitting on benches as we waited in the cool night air a Maasai warrior came along serving hot tea with milk. We drank tea, listened to the children, and gazed at the amazing night sky.

Then, with the suddenness of an angel's appearance, a lone light bulb set on a pole lit up the village. We were surprised to see a large crowd had gathered while we waited. The worship service, filled with the Holy Spirit's power, was alive with promise and excitement. The songs were enthusiastically voiced in the cool night air. When Pastor Herman Kweka finished the sermon he invited me to speak to the congregation. When the service ended I was honored with an "authority stick" and a letter.

That evening was a highlight of our trip. The awe and wonder that filled us at the sight of the star lit sky gave way to an even greater awe as the congregation worshiped under the canopy of heaven. But for me the most important part of the evening was the letter handed to me by a village elder.

The letter honored Bethlehem by asking our assistance for building a church in the village. The story is familiar to us, the many elderly folks in the village were having difficulty walking the several miles to Orkesumet to worship in the church in town. I was honored and humbled by the simple and sincere request. I thought of Bethlehem's seniors who struggle against the vagaries of age in order to add their voices to the congregation's praise. Bethlehem was honored by this request to help build a village church.

Earlier that day we were presented with another request. Bethlehem was asked to help build a much needed school in Orkesumet. To both requests I said, "If it is God's will, then it will be so." These two requests are most memorable for me because they conveyed the burning desire of people to carry the message of salvation in Christ through worship and education in ways that had not been known before in this part of the Naberera Parish. They are most memorable, and most humbling, because Bethlehem was honored by the ones making the requests.

To be asked something is to be honored by the one making the request. Pastor Kweka knew that Bethlehem had been helpful in building the roof on the church building in Namalulu. Bethlehem's gifts have been helpful in bringing the church building in Naberera closer to being complete. Can you, meaning Bethlehem, help us? Pastor Kweka honored us by asking us to be partners with Naberera Parish in growing in its ability to do ministry. *(continued)*

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Halloween
Party
October 18

Pastor's Message *(continued)*

God honors us when we are asked to pray, to open ourselves to trusting God's promises for our lives. In his Small Catechism, Martin Luther wrote regarding the opening line of the Lord's Prayer, "With these words God wants to attract us, so that we believe he is truly our Father and we are truly his children, in order that we may ask him boldly and with complete confidence, just as loving children ask their loving parents."

To be stewards of Christ's Church is an honor, and a humbling experience. To be a steward is to be honored, and humbled, with the request to care for something that belongs to another. In our case, God honors us by asking us to care for our congregation which belongs to Christ. When we are asked to give, it is not for our own glory, nor is it for our own satisfaction. When we are asked to give it is because we have the honor, the privilege, the means, and the will to participate in the life of our congregation, the life of our synod, and the life of our denomination.

I honor you with these requests: please pray for the opportunity to help build the village church in Naberera parish; please pray for the opportunity to build a much needed Lutheran school in Orkesumet; please pray and consider what your generous gifts to Bethlehem can do for our congregation's mission here and across the world; please pray that the Holy Spirit will empower us to meet the growing challenges of bearing Christ to the world; and finally, please come to worship as often as possible that we might also honor our God by asking in prayer for peace for our troubled world.

Amani, Pr. Gary

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank everyone for the great support that was received for the Committee Fair on September 7. All the committees did a wonderful job in getting set up and showing the members of the congregation the opportunities to serve that are available to all of us. We will be hearing more in September and November with short temple talks from the different committees. Thank you, Karen Gilbert, Rob McMillion, Dick Stokke

Saturday Afternoon Movies at Bethlehem

Bethlehem Website

Thanks to the hard work of Jennice O'Brien, Bethlehem now has a new website. This website is great and has potential to grow as we grow. Take a look and if you see something that needs to be added please feel free to let Mary Lasits know. The site address is www.bethlehemdekab.org.

Remember this is still in the early stages and lots of tweaking needs to happen regarding information!!! Great job Jennice!!!

October Movies

Saturday, October 11

"Absolute Power" starring (and directed by) Clint Eastwood, Gene Hackman, Ed Harris and Laura Linney
1996/Color/121 minutes
("One of the best movies Eastwood has made. Smart and suspenseful.")
—Roger Ebert

Saturday, October 25

"The Blackwater Lightship" starring Angela Lansbury and Diane Wiest (Hallmark Hall of Fame)
2004/Color/109 minutes
(A compelling story of love, hope & reconciliation.)
All movies start at 2:00 p.m.



Membership Updates, Concerns and Thanks

Thank you to the LCW Board for all they did to make the Fall Salad Supper and Program a success. Thanks to all who brought salads and to Pastor Gary, Pat and Karen for presenting the wonderful program.

*Dear Friends,
"Thank you for all the cards, prayers, and Pastor Gary's visits. Your caring concerns meant so much to me."*

*Blessings,
Bob Hongisto*

To Our Groundskeepers — SPECIAL THANKS!

Thank you to the following "Super Crew" for a job well done:

**Marian Riippi
Gordon Rasmussen
Gary Brooks
Bill Gulke
Louis Wright
Van O'Brien
John & A.J. Metzler
Pat McMillion
Frank & Alan Garcia
Wayne Coffman
John Cole
Bob & Marilyn Hongisto**

Deepest sympathy to the Makela family on the recent death of Richard Makela. Funeral services were held on September 15.

Altar Flowers Scheduled for . . .

October 5	Luchsinger Family
October 12	<u>++Flowers Needed++</u>
October 19	Ewing Family
October 26	Ed & Edna Schramm

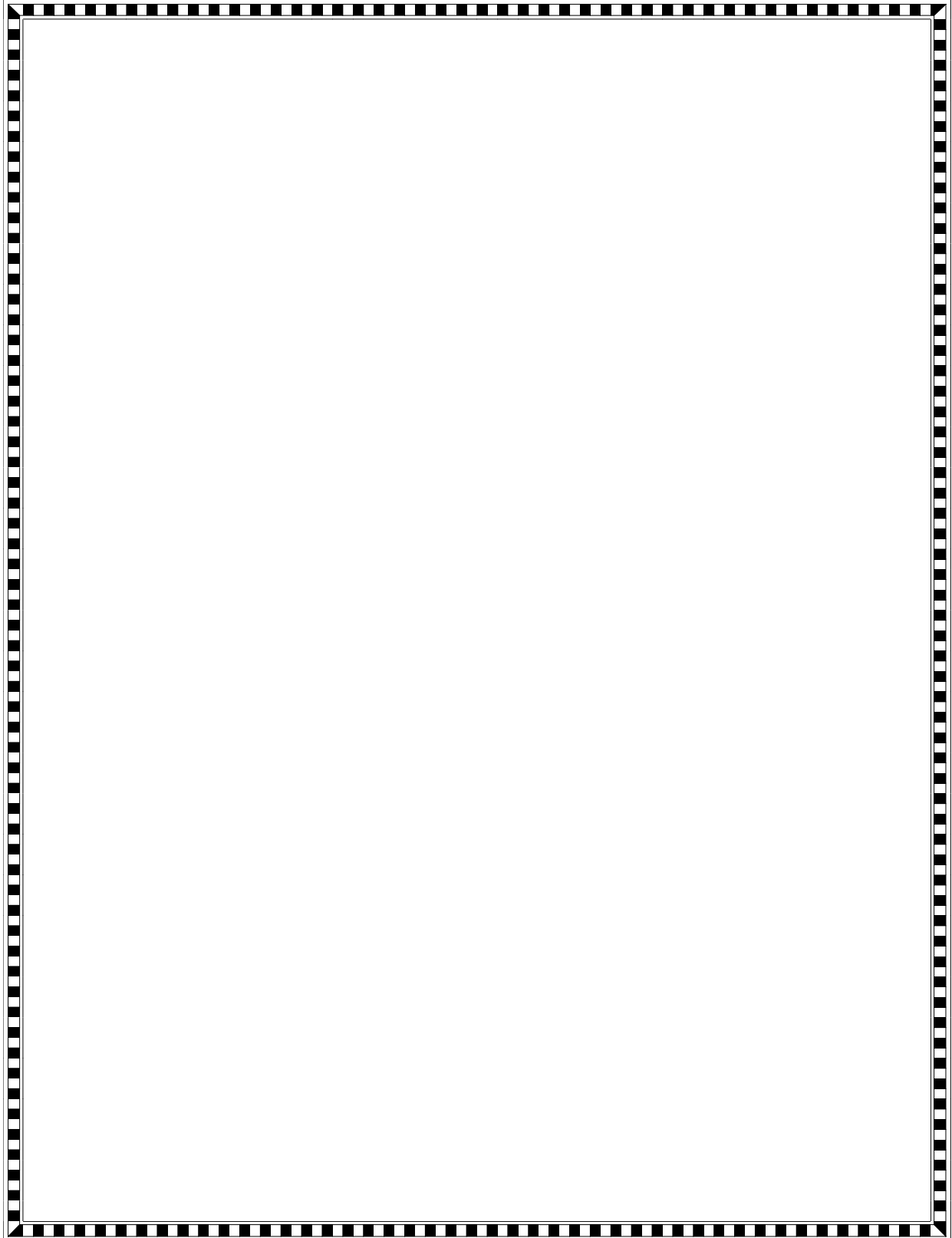
Dear Bethlehem Family,
"Thank you for your kind expressions of sympathy on the loss of our sister, aunt and grandmother, Sarah Cooper. The lunch at the church was wonderful."

Sincerely,
Chippy, Suzie, Neal,
Julie, Kim and Mark

"Thank you for your kindness and sympathy at a time when it was deeply appreciated. Your ministry of hospitality and presence were deeply appreciated. If you wish, please use this gift as you see fit, perhaps in support of seminary scholarships."

Edna Kukkonen

Chili Contest — October 18



Thank you!

Thank you letters to our congregation:

“On behalf of Bishop Hanson, the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, thank you for Bethlehem Lutheran Church’s recent gifts given through your synod between May 2008 and July 2008.

Gifts like yours make a real difference in the world as the ELCA works to spread the Gospel, build and nurture the faith lives of others, reach out to the unchurched, provide educational opportunities and much more. Thanks to your partnership, the ELCA’s commitment to these ministries is a long term investment in future generations.

I pray that you will find great joy in knowing what your support makes possible in the lives of others today, and in the future. Through partners like you we are making a difference in the world and making Christ known.”



Sincerely yours,
 Carol A. Erickson
 Director, Donor Stewardship

Summer 2008

“On behalf of the Northern Illinois Synod Hunger Committee, thank you for your generous response to the 2007 ELCA World Hunger Appeal and disaster responses. Your faithful response added to our other congregations’ responses allow us to answer the tragedy of hunger in our world. Our synod response this year gave us the distinction as #1 in the ELCA in per member giving at \$13.50 per member. The congregations supporting our Foods Resource Bank (FRB) growing projects have significantly helped increase our hunger appeal support year after year. A special thanks to you. We also received a very large gift from an individual donor to make this all possible.

You can be assured that your gifts are used wisely to provide what people really need and in cooperation with other relief and aid organizations. Check out www.ELCA.org/hunger for stories of people helped and ideas for ways to help.

We look forward to continuing our partnership to respond to God’s amazing grace with increased zeal for learning about the causes of hunger, sharing our financial gifts with the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, and praying for God’s guidance.”



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY
(First Saturday of each month)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4
8:30—9:30 A.M.
(Mark your calendars for November 1.)

We spend an hour reading Scripture and talking about issues important to faith, life and the issues that face us publicly and personally.
Come once, or come each month, the coffee's always on!

Weekly Men's
Breakfast

This group meets Friday mornings just before 8:00 a.m. at the Lincoln Inn in downtown DeKalb.

Come as often
as you can!



Sunday Adult Study

Adult Study: Sundays in October

The gift of Hope in Revelation

A 4 part study based on

"Joy in Our Weakness: A gift of Hope from the Book of Revelation."

By Dr. Marva J. Dawn,

Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

October 5: Hope in the midst of suffering.

October 12: Hope in the midst of joy.

October 19: Hope for the ancient Church.

October 26: Hope for today.

Ushers for Sundays in October

October 5	Ed & Edna Schramm Ed & Judy Sisler	October 19	Larry & Joan Vandre June Whitney Norma Wiegartz
October 12	Dick & Laurel Stokke Harry & Mona Theisen	October 26	Carole Asbell Lorna Bemis Jane Bidstrup LaVern Burhop

Greeters for Sundays in October



October 5	Ray Steinbis Elmie Carey	October 19	Don Davidson Lorna Knuutila
October 12	Wayne Coffman Nancy Coffman	October 26	Ann, Noah & Abbey Brooks

Lectors for September

October 5	Valerie Talsma
October 12	Sarah Trostle
October 19	Richelle Johnson
October 26	Brittany Nelson

Communion Asst.

October 5	Dick Stokke Laurel Stokke
October 12	Ray Steinbis Valerie Talsma
October 19	Harry Theisen Mona Theisen
October 26	Myron Bond Wayne Coffman



Kid's Fun Page

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

As Jesus tells us in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, all people are our neighbors. You can make a difference for others, beginning in your own neighborhood. Make and share this craft so people know you care and are thankful for your community.

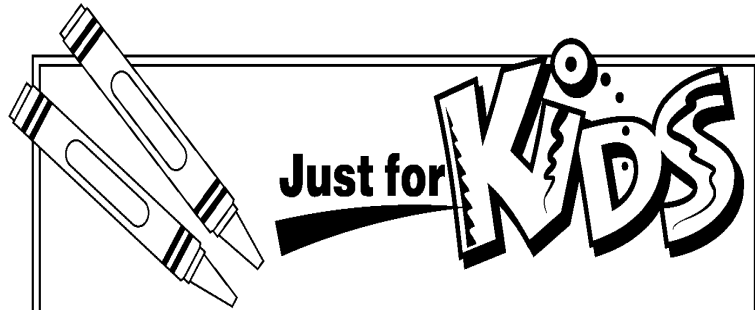
What you need:

- Clear, disposable, non-powdered, non-latex gloves
- Craft paint
- Paintbrush
- Popped popcorn (about 3 cups per glove)
- Rubber bands
- Ribbon or raffia
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Markers or crayons
- Hole punch



What you do:

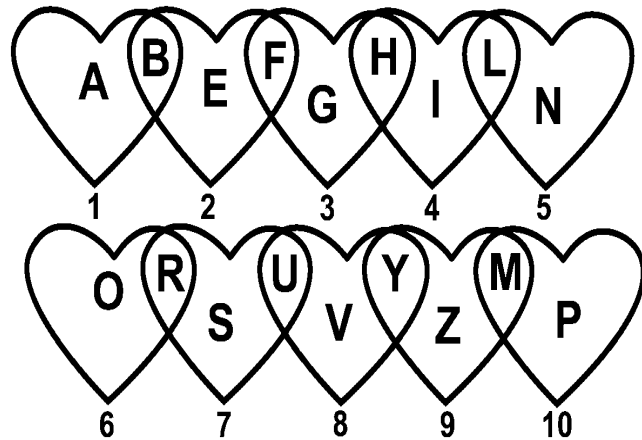
1. Paint one side of the glove's fingertips to look like fingernails.
2. Fill the fingertips, then the rest of the glove, with cooled popcorn.
3. Wrap a rubber band around the wrist of the glove.
4. Tie ribbon or raffia around the rubber band.
5. Make a card. Ideas include "Welcome to the neighborhood," "Thanks for being such nice neighbors," "Here's how we'd like to serve you," etc.
6. Punch a hole in the corner of your card and tie it to the glove.
7. With an adult, pass out your "neighborly" gifts.



THE SECOND GREAT Commandment

In the Gospels, Jesus tells us that the greatest commandment is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37, NIV).

Do you remember what the second great commandment is? Use the code below to discover it.



“L
 4,5 6 8 2 8,9 6 7,8 6,7
 5 2 4 3 3,4 1,2 6 6,7
 1 7
 8,9 6 7,8 6,7 7 2 4,5 2,3”

Matthew 22:39, NIV

Answer: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Sunday School News

The Barnyard

"People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them."

Mark 10:13

The Frogpond

(Senior and Junior High)

Announcing DeKalb Area Youth:

The more the merrier!! It's the phrase that best fits what is happening in DeKalb lately. First, Trinity, Salem and Bethlehem have been in conversation and are currently working together to do more together. After a series of meetings we have planned out the rest of the year together. So keep your eye out for what is happening around town.

Mark Your Calendars:

NIU Campus Ministry Lock-In

October 3 – 4, 8:00pm – 8:00pm, cost \$25.00

Don't miss this great annual event! It's a favorite for all of us.

DeKalb Area Youth Events:

Get Acquainted Event: Oct. 11 @ 5pm, here at Bethlehem. Cost is \$2.00 to offset the cost of the pizza. Join your friends from school for pizza and games.

Hayride: Sponsored by Salem, Oct. 14 from 3pm – 7pm. Activities not only include a Hayride but tomato slinging as well. Of course, food will be served. If you are interested let Mary know by October 5!!!

Concert and Pizza: On Nov. 2, we have been invited to join First for a Concert and pizza out in Rockford. Exact details to follow, so let Mary Lasits know if you are interested as soon as possible.

Progressive Dinner: This is still in the planning stages but here's what we know; Appetizers at Salem, Salad at Bethlehem, Main Course at First, and Dessert at Trinity.

For the rest of the Barnyard

Halloween Party:

This year we are really going to have some fun!! **The Halloween Party begins at 3 pm and transitions to the Chili Contest at 5:30 pm on Oct. 18.** Wear your costume and win some prizes. Don't forget the piñatas for each age group!!!

Halloween Party Help:

This annual favorite is fun for all ages and has become a community favorite and another sample of Bethlehem's hospitality. Just like anything that has to do with young children, it takes a village. If you are willing to run a game or help with refreshments let Mary Lasits know.

Crop Walk Scheduled for October 5

Your donations to Crop Walk can help make a big difference:

\$25 can provide blankets to a family of five displaced by violence or natural disaster.

\$45 can provide 30 jerry cans to carry clean water for drinking and cooking.

\$150 can buy a hundred chickens and two wire chicken coops, providing two families with a reliable source of eggs, protein, and income.

\$500 can provide small start-up loans that enable women to jump-start a business, such as making school uniforms.

Together we can make a DIFFERENCE! Join the Crop Walk Hunger Walk or contribute to a walker or contact www.churchworldservice.org.

Concordia University Chicago
Sunday, October 18
8:00 p.m.

Concordia University invites you to hear world-renowned choir, *Gloria Dei Cantores*, as a part of the annual Lectures in the Church Music Series. The concert will be held at Grace Lutheran Church, 7300 Division Street, River Forest, on Sunday, October 19 at 8:00 p.m. *Gloria Dei Cantores* (Singers to the Glory of God) holds a passionate dedication to find and express the most authentic and compelling interpretation of sacred choral music spanning two millennia. The group has toured in 23 countries in Europe, Asia, and North America, performing in 18 languages, with a discography of more than 30 recordings. Tickets are available at the door for \$25 general admission, \$20 for seniors, and \$15 for students. For more information, call (708) 209-3060.



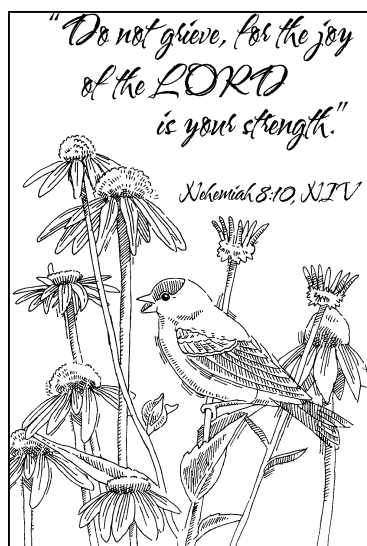
Odds & Ends—FYI

FUNDS & TOILETRIES NEEDED

The Good Samaritan Fund continues to need funds for those having financial problems. The Good Samaritan toiletries cabinet in Pastor Gary's office also needs new shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant and bar soap. If you could donate some of these items occasionally, please see Pastor Gary or the church office.

BIG BROTHERS-BIG SISTERS

Join Family Service Agency for this community-mentoring program available to children throughout DeKalb County between the ages of 5 and 18. The program focuses on building strong, positive relationships between children and adults in which the adult provides a stable friendship and a positive role model usually for 3-5 hours per week. The program is beneficial to those children who are new to the area, are struggling to create friendships, encountering difficulties in school or at home, or who may easily succumb to negative peer influences.



The Greater Kishwaukee Area Concert Band will present "Going Through Europe" on **Sunday, October 19, 3:00 p.m.**, in the Boutell Memorial Concert Hall. John Hansen has selected music from different parts of Europe for this free and handicapped accessible "tour." Open to anyone over the age of 18 who played a wind or percussion instrument in the past, this all volunteer band requires no auditions. Rehearsals are held from 7:30—9:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings in the Huntley Middle School Band Room in DeKalb. For more information, please call Sue (815) 899-4867.

Highlights of Church Council — September 9

Pastor's Report

Pastor Gary felt that the Committee Fair was a big success. He thought it should take the place of the "Time and Talent" sheet.

Pastor will attend a Leadership Conference September 22-24 and plans to be away for All Saints' Sunday. He requested Pastor Diane from Lutheran Campus Ministry fill the pulpit that Sunday and do communion.

Arrangements for Rev. Dingle of Food for the Poor discussed.

Mary Lasits' Report

Mary was on vacation. All plans are in order for Rally Day and the beginning of Sunday School.

Committee Reports

Stewardship — no report.

Finance

The Mary Pantilla estate has finally been settled and Bethlehem will receive \$17,446.83. According to by-laws it will be divided as follows: 10% will go to Bethlehem, 40% to the Mission Gift Fund, and 50% to the Mission Endowment Fund. The current balance in the memorial fund is \$7,794.73.

Tammy Farley expressed concern that our giving and expenses still do not match. Pastor commented that conversations with other pastors report that other churches are having the same problems during this financial crisis.

Mission Endowment

A "Chili Cookoff" is planned for October 18. The earnings will go to pay for the boiler project.

Earnings from the Mission Endowment Fund total about \$10,000. Sharing in the wealth will be: Lutheran Campus Ministry towards Pastor Diane's salary which is now full time, Naberera Project for school and maybe church, New Mission Start-Resurrection Church, Troop 232, Grace Lutheran Church, DeKalb County Hospice, Hope Haven, Food for the Poor, 8 Bean Project, and Evangelical Lutheran Church Disaster Relief.

Worship & Music — no meeting.

Property — Boiler project to begin September 22

Social Ministry — Food Pantry provided for 364 households in August, with 1,265 people served.

Mutual Ministry—no meeting

Old Business

Date set for Annual Meeting Part I will be December 7.

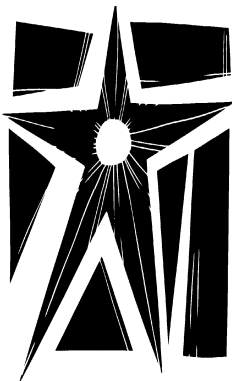
Suggested that the Ethnic Christmas celebration consider being held on Saturday, December 6.

The Congregational Meeting Part II will be January 25.

Committees were asked to begin the budget process by reviewing expenses of this year, anticipating needs and presenting a plan for their group to the Finance Committee.

Meeting adjourned.

Bethlehem Star



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Bethlehem Evangelical
Lutheran Church
1915 N. First Street
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Phone: 815-758-3203
Fax: 815-758-1411
Email: belcdekalb@comcast.net

Address Label Here

www.bethlehemdekalb.org



Birthday List for October

Birthday Greetings to:

2 Laura Hammes
9 Irene Ekstrom
11 Rose Mary Garcia
12 Emma Silk
13 Kent Zak
16 Karin Stokke
17 Carl Hargrave
Kevin Breuer

23 Savanna Cunz
24 Shirley Meinert
Eliane Baumann
25 Bob Hongisto
Brenda Luhtala
26 Laura Olson
27 Christine McMillion
28 Edna Schramm



If you don't find your name on the Birthday Lists, please call the church office at 758-3203.