

Bethlehem Star

A Message from Pastor Gary

"For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them." [2 Corinthians 5:14-15]

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Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In the ELCA we talk about the 3 expressions of the church. The first expression is the congregation. There are nearly 10,500 ELCA congregations in North America and the Caribbean. The second expression is found in the 65 synods that unite the work of congregations within their geographical regions. The third expression is the Churchwide Organization supporting congregations, synods, outreach, justice advocacy, international missions and the many other tasks of a 21st century church.

There is a playful dynamic within the three expressions. There is interdependence among the three. Bethlehem benefits from the rich treasure of resources that come to us from the synod and churchwide organizations. This is not, however, a one way street! The synod and churchwide organizations also benefit from the rich treasure of resources found in every congregation.

The church, in its three expressions, is a sacred trust given to us. It is sacred because from it we learn of the love of God made known through Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is a trust because God hands over the keys of the church to ordinary humans and asks us to care for it until Christ returns. The Christian rock group Petra sings it this way:

"It's a sacred trust that You gave to us
To take Your Word into all the world
It's a sacred trust that You gave to us
The message of salvation and Your love
You never shied away from critical debate
Or beat around the bushes when discussing human fate
You weren't ashamed to tell them who Your Father was
Never ran from persecution like human nature does
You prayed for all believers on Your knees
Then you handed us the keys."

(continued)



Halloween
Party
October 24

Pastor's Message *(continued)*

The love of Christ urges us on as we engage in the privilege of being the church in this day and place. The love of Christ urges us as we engage our community, our region and our world with God's Word. The love of Christ urges us on...

Thank you for your prayers, partnership, financial support and assistance in these sacred trusts – Bethlehem, the Northern Illinois Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Amani,
Pr. Gary

Highlights of Pastor Gary's Autumn Schedule

September 27: Guest preacher at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Seneca, IL

September 28-30: Professional Leaders Conference, Rockford, IL

October 4 – 14: Chennai, India. Meeting of Arcot Lutheran Church, Danish Lutheran Church, ELCA, Global Health Ministries and Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry.

November 14-15: "Colors of Hope," Peace House Africa fund raising banquet, Minneapolis, MN.

Saturday Afternoon Movies at Bethlehem

WORLD COMMUNION
SUNDAY



October 4

October Movies

Saturday, October 17 *"The Electric Horseman"* starring Robert Redford and Jane Fonda
1979/Color/2 hours

Saturday, October 31 *"Blind Spot"* starring Joanne Woodward, and Laura Linney
(a Hallmark Gold Crown Movie)
1999/Color/109 minutes

Everyone is invited! Popcorn and soda pop is always available.



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 Bonnie Siegel for presenting the wonderful program.

To Our Groundskeepers — SPECIAL THANKS!

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

**Marian Riippi
Gordon Rasmussen
Anna Fischer
Bill Gulke
Peter Kalamatianos
John & A.J. Metzler
Bob & Marilyn Hongisto**

*Dear Bethlehem Family,
“Thank you for all your acts of kindness and prayers during Chippy’s recent illness and passing. She loved her church and her church family.”
Susan Spohn & Greg Cox*

Thank you to all those who are contributing to our diaper drive. A box will be available for your donations each Sunday.

Dear Friends,
“**We thank you** for your prayers and remembrances during my recent surgery. How special to have a praying and loving church family. It blessed our days in Rochester. I’m now feeling stronger each day and happy to be home.”
Our love, Harry & Mona Theisen

Deepest sympathy to the Family of Helene Riihimaki on her recent death. Funeral services were held September 2.
Also sympathy to Mary Lasits on the death of her grandmother in New York.

Congratulations to Mark & Sara Domroes on the recent birth of their daughter, Chloe, born September 14.

Dear Fellow Members of Bethlehem,
Paul Gilbert and Pastor Gary Erickson,

“**I truly thank** all of you for your donations in the Good Samaritan Fund under my name, Rebecca Koss. I am very grateful for the car and I am pleased to report that I am back to work. (I help others remain in their homes as long as possible.) I will not forget what the church has done for me. I don’t come to Bethlehem for this extravagant gift, I come to Bethlehem to worship and understand the Lord and I will do what I can to serve Bethlehem as much as possible.”

Sincerely, Rebecca Koss

Bethlehem Ethnic Christmas Dinner

I have taken over the responsibility of the Ethnic Dinner. Virginia has stepped down after many years of coordinating and doing a wonderful job.

I NEED YOUR HELP . . .

Anyone interested in helping with kitchen duty, set up, take down and cleanup, or the program, please contact me. Together, we can keep up the tradition!
Karen Gilbert

Chili Contest — October 24

2nd Annual Chili – Contest!

Saturday, October 24, 2009
5:30-7:30

Enter your best chili or come enjoy the samples and join in the judging!

4 Categories:

- Meat chili (any heat range) – **no beans!**
- Meat **and beans!** – chili (any heat range)
- Chili – hot – any way you like it!!!
- Vegetarian chili



Bring your chili ready to serve. Bring enough for a potluck! Chili will be judged from 5:30pm – 6:15pm. After that we'll eat the rest!!!

All are welcome as judges. You may vote as many times as you wish. Each vote costs \$1.00 (a \$5.00 bill = 5 votes, etc.) The chili from each category collecting the most money will win that category. The chili collecting the most money overall will be declared grand champion. Proceeds benefit "Mount of Olives".

Mount of Olives is an ELCA ministry supporting Augusta Victoria hospital and Palestinian Christians in the Middle East. Link: <http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Global-Mission/Engage-in-Global-Mission/Support/Global-Giving/MOHP.aspx>

Use the form below to register your chili or chilis! Bring several if you wish – the more the chillier!!!

Name: _____

Category(ies) Entered: _____

News & Announcements for October 2009

Tanzanian New Life Band to Perform in Rockford

All are invited to hear the exciting sounds of New Life Band, the six-member musical team from Tanzania, East Africa. They will perform on Thursday, October 8, from 7 - 9 pm, at Katie's Cup coffeebar, located at 502 Seventh Street, Rockford. In addition to the Katie's Cup performance, the group will appear at area schools throughout the week, with a final community concert on Sunday, October 11, 6:30 pm, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 3300 Rural Street, Rockford. All concerts are free; donations are welcomed.

Over the past 25 years, the New Life Band has developed an active and vibrant ministry to youth and students (primarily teenagers) in Tanzania through school visitations, national youth camps and conferences, outdoor Christian rallies, concerts and performances, and one-on-one counseling and guidance. Their ministry has been deeply committed to reaching out to help today's youth of Tanzania often caught up in an atmosphere of poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, and lack of direction for their lives. Their concerts and rallies reach more than 600,000 people each year.

For more information about the New Life Band, go to www.newlifeband.net. For information about the local concerts, contact Katie's Cup, 815.986.0628 or Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 815.399.0531.

Coffee with the Bishop

Northern Illinois Synod Bishop Gary Wollersheim will host four informal Saturday morning conversations this fall. Topics will include the August ELCA Churchwide Assembly and other important topics concerning the Church.

Doors will open at 9:30 am with coffee and water available. Program will begin at 10:00 with Morning prayer. The Bishop will speak for ½ hour followed by question and answer time and adjourn by 11:30.

- October 17 at Immanuel, Dixon
- October 31 at Faith, Joliet
- November 21 at Trinity, Moline
- December 5 at Our Savior's, Rockford

Exploring Arcot

On Sunday evening, October 4, Pastor Gary leaves for India. After arriving Monday night in Chennai he will join representatives from ELCA Global Missions, Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry, the Danish Lutheran Church, the Arcot Lutheran Church, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in India. Meetings are scheduled for October 8 and 9 to strengthen the companionships shared among the participating bodies. As Companion Parish Coordinator for the Northern Illinois Synod Pastor Gary will be working on strengthening and building congregation to congregation relationships. Following the formal meetings he hopes to visit many of the companion congregations who share relationships with NIS congregations. Pastor Gary will return to DeKalb on Wednesday, October 14.

One in Mission

One in Mission: Companion Parish Program Event
Saturday, October 24, 2009
9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Bethlehem Lutheran Church,
1915 N. First St. DeKalb

"I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers." [Ephesians 1: 15-16]

"As Christians, we are not fully the one holy and catholic church without a global perspective. A companion relationship enlarges our world view. Global connections help us see the world's challenges in new ways and examine our own problems and joys through new eyes. These connections also strengthen God's mission in the world." (ELCA Global Mission Companion Synods Handbook, p. 3)

Join us as we explore this life giving, exiting opportunity to engage Lutheran Christians in distant lands. The Global Mission Committee has planned this event for all current and prospective companion congregations in the Northern Illinois Synod. With more than 30 active parish-to-parish relationships relating to companions in Tanzania and India we have just begun to open the doors of this mission opportunity. This event is designed to strengthen current relationships and encourage new relationships.

ELCA Global Mission Unit special guests will be the Reverend Gary Hansen, Associate for Global Mission Partnerships, and the Reverend Joseph Chu, Director for Mission Interpretation and Support (Asia Pacific).

Agenda:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 9:00 – 9:30 | Gathering and fellowship |
| 9:30 – 9:45 | Devotions |
| 9:45 – 10:00 | Introductions and summary of NIS Companionships |
| 10:00 – 10:45 | 10 Guiding Principles for Companionships |
| 10:45 – 11:00 | Break |
| 11:00 – 12:30 | The "nuts and bolts" of international companionship – small group discussion, questions. |
| 12:30 | Lunch and continued discussion |

Members and friends of Bethlehem are invited to come, learn, share and grow in your understanding of our companion relationships. This is an excellent opportunity to connect with other congregations, learn about their mission partners and share information about our international relationships.



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

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3
8:30—9:30 A.M.
(Mark your calendars for November 7.)

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

Sunday, October 4
10:10 a.m.

"Reflections on Tanzania"

Eric, Chris, Richelle and Ryan Johnson traveled to Tanzania during the summer of 2009.

Come join us in the Fellowship Hall as we share their African adventure.

Highlights of Church Council — September 8

Pastor's Report: Pastor announced several meetings coming up that would be of interest to council members.

On September 15, 6:30 p.m., Bethlehem Lutheran Church and Pastor Curt Nordby, Assistant to the Bishop, will meet with the Church Council and the Stewardship Committee. Pastor Nordby's expertise is Stewardship.

On September 19, 8:30-12:30, at the Congregation Church, a workshop on anti-racism will be held with particular focus on DeKalb. All the major agencies are involved with this meeting. Bethlehem contributed \$250 to the program with the money coming from the Memorial Fund.

On October 24, 9:00-1:00, here at Bethlehem, there will be a meeting of companion congregations with India and Africa. Pastor Gary is coordinating this event. The women of the church will be asked to arrange a lunch for the attendees.

The first second service on August 30 had 35 people attending. The council was pleased with the beginning of this new offering.

Social Ministry: In August, 630 households were served at the food pantry representing 1,861 people.

Stewardship: Jerry Johns did a survey of the Church Council to learn about the average % of giving by council members. With 7 persons responding, the average was 8% of their annual income given as offering to Bethlehem. Jerry feels this information will be helpful as we get into the Stewardship program.

The Memorial Fund now has \$7,425.00.

Property Committee: Several projects are in the planning stage—shortening pews to accommodate wheelchairs, moving the altar rail to provide easier access for communion, removing the curb between the sidewalk and parking lot in front, and leveling the floor in the balcony on the east side to facilitate more space for the bell choir. To provide the congregation more information about the pew project and the altar rail move, a meeting is planned for September 27 between services. This meeting will provide the congregation with a time to ask questions about the projects.

New business: In preparation for fall planning of annual meetings and budget, the council thought it was a good idea to look over the constitution and by-laws. There was concern about information in one copy that was not in another.

Pastor and Anna Fischer are going to take a look and report back.

Ushers for Sundays in October 8:45 a.m.

| | | | |
|------------|--|------------|---|
| October 4 | Eldon & Helen Miller Betty Ruby Ray Steinbis | October 18 | Dick & Laurel Stokke June Whitney Norma Wiegartz |
| October 11 | Ed & Edna Schramm Ed & Judy Sisler | October 25 | Carole Asbell Jane Bidstrup LaVern Burhop Butch Burrignt |

Greeters for Sundays in October 8:45 a.m.

| | |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| October 4 | Don Davidson Lorna Knuuttila |
| October 11 | Frank & Rose Mary Garcia |
| October 18 | Paul & Karen Gilbert |
| October 25 | Bill & Susan Gulke |

Lectors for October 8:45

| | |
|------------|---------------|
| October 4 | Kathleen Hunt |
| October 11 | Annette Johns |
| October 18 | Frank Luedtke |
| October 25 | Rob McMillion |

Communion Asst.

| | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| October 4 | Virginia Luedtke Edna Schramm |
| October 11 | Judy Sisler Ray Steinbis |
| October 18 | Valerie Talsma Myron Bond |
| October 25 | Harry & Mona Theisen |



Ushers for Sundays in October 11:00 a.m.

| | |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| October 4 | Gordon Rasmussen Pat Erickson |
| October 11 | Barb Luchsinger Amanda Luchsinger |
| October 18 | Maria McMillion Tammie Farley |
| October 25 | Wayne & Nancy Coffman |

Greeters for Sundays in October 11:00 a.m.

| | |
|------------|----------------------|
| October 4 | Margie Hargrave |
| October 11 | Kathleen Hunt |
| October 18 | Anna Fischer |
| October 25 | Dick & Laurel Stokke |

Lectors for October 11:00

| | |
|------------|---------------|
| October 4 | Pat Erickson |
| October 11 | Myron Bond |
| October 18 | Rob McMillion |
| October 25 | Wayne Coffman |



Thanksgiving for our Food Pantry Clients



Please help us with our Annual Holiday Meal Boxes!

You can help some needy families have a nice dinner this Thanksgiving!

The Food Banks are offering holiday meal boxes that serve 8 which include a 12-14 pound turkey, stuffing mix, instant potatoes, two veggies, cranberry sauce, dessert and more for just \$15. We must order early, so write your check for the Food Pantry soon and we will order. This will save you the trouble of hauling canned goods and we will save a lot of money by shopping at the Food Banks!

We will order at least 60-70 boxes for our Food Pantry clients, so your generous donations would be greatly appreciated.

Make your checks payable to Bethlehem and note that it is for the Thanksgiving boxes.

Crop Walk Scheduled for October 18

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.

****If we can get 10 walkers for Crop Walk our Food Pantry will receive \$900!****

SO . . . Sign up in the church office ASAP! If you don't want to walk, just donate \$\$\$ to one of our other walkers.



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)

Third Annual Junior High Lock-In @ Lutheran Campus Ministry: Mark your calendars for the annual lock-in! Details: November 6-7, 8pm – 8am, the cost is \$25.00. If you are interested let Mary know to get registration form. This is always a blast. **High School Students come and be leaders for the event!!**

Monday Night Youth Group: We are having a good time so if you haven't joined us yet come on Monday (every Monday) from 6pm – 7:30pm in the Frog Pond. Friends are always invited.

Sunday School: We meet every Sunday from 10am – 10:50am. Bring your friends. See you then!

The Rest of the Barnyard

Sunday School: We are studying Creation, The First Sin, and Joseph and His Brothers this first semester.

If you have updated information; new phone number, address, or email let us know!

PLEASE NOTE: The Sunday School kids are scheduled to share two songs they have been learning on October 11, at the 11:00 a.m. service during the children's sermon.

Adults, we would love to see you too. If you are interested in helping out, talk to Mary and sign up to lead Art (Crafts), Storytelling (teaching a skit, make a craft puppet...), Kitchen Experiments (using food and science to teach the lesson. We give you step by step instructions including what to say to the youngsters. **Very easy and fun!!**

Getaway(youth group for first grade through 5th grade): We will start back up for another six week session beginning November 4 – December 9, on Wednesday nights, from 4pm – 5pm. We will be continuing to learn about the Old Testament but with fun and games.

Vacation Bible School: This is always labor intensive and timely planning keeps it from being overwhelming so let's meet just to plan our theme and what we want to do next year. Quick meeting on Saturday, October 17, 9:30am – 10:30am! Let Mary know if you are planning on attending.

Prayer Partners for Sunday School: We are looking for people to be partnered with a Sunday School student and pray for them throughout the school year. You may do more if you wish like send a card but the minimum is to pray for the student. Let Mary know if you are interested in being a Prayer Partner.

Annual Halloween Party



ANNUAL HALLOWEEN PARTY

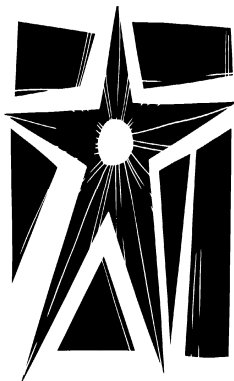
Dust off Your Costumes!!
Or
Come for the treats

When: October 24, 2009 from 3pm – 5pm

Where: Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Fellowship Hall

Reminder: Donations of candy are appreciated – look for the basket in the Fellowship Hall. Stay for Chili!!

Bethlehem Star



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Permit #121

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Email: belcdekalb@comcast.net

Address Label Here

www.bethlehemdekalb.org



Birthday List for October



Birthday Greetings to:

| | | | |
|----|------------------|----|---------------------|
| 2 | Laura Hammes | 23 | Savanna Cunz |
| 9 | Irene Ekstrom | 24 | Shirley Meinert |
| 11 | Rose Mary Garcia | | Eliane Baumann |
| 12 | Kent Zak | 25 | Bob Hongisto |
| 16 | Karin Stokke | | Brenda Luhtala |
| 17 | Carl Hargrave | 26 | Laura Olson |
| | Kevin Breuer | 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.