

Bethlehem Star

A Message from Our Pastor

**Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
Who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.**

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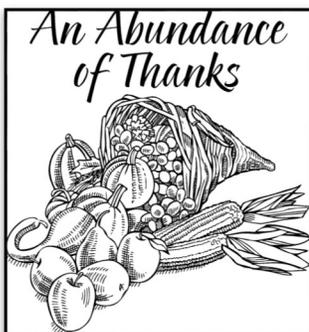
The writer of this hymn is Martin Rinkart (1586-1649). He was the Bishop of Eilenberg, Germany during the Thirty Years' War. Since Eilenberg was a walled city, it became a place of refuge for fugitives of the war, and also a place of famine and disease due to overcrowding. In 1637 at the height of their misery, Rinkart was the only clergyman left in the city who could perform the 40 or 50 necessary burial services daily -- one of which was for his wife. As if that weren't enough, the city was sacked three times by invaders, one of which imposed a large tribute payment upon the people. During this time, Rinkart wrote 66 hymns. *Now Thank We All Our God* was one of them. God's grace in action.

https://hymnary.org/text/now_thank_we_all_our_god

Writing a hymn was certainly a grace-filled response to Martin Rinkart's life experience and reliance on God. Our giving is a thankful response to the joyful abundance of God's rich grace in Christ. Certainly there are other reasons why we might share gifts, but the foundational reason for our giving is God's grace in Christ. Our stewardship is first and foremost in response to God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.

Giving in Grace is how we live and walk in the midst of God's grace every day. It is a lifestyle and practice of discipleship as we LIVE IN and LIVE OUT God's abundant grace. God's action on our behalf is giving in grace, a grace that is unconditional and free. Our giving in grace is motivated by God's own giving, living gracefully in the midst of God's rich promises in Christ. Giving in grace informs who we are and all we do as God's people in mission. How we understand discipleship, live as disciples, and grow in our giving are questions of living in God's grace and how we respond to this life giving gift.

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Message from Our Pastor (continued)

For several week we have heard members speak from the heart of what Bethlehem means for them and why they give. We started the season with our Mission Endowment Fund Distribution Sunday reminding us again of all the mission we are able to be involved in: our food pantry, our youth and young people, mission both near and far. We are God's family in this place...and we have work to do.

All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,
the Son and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven
the one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore;
for thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

Blessings, Pastor Elizabeth

Emergency Updates from Lutheran World Relief

As of mid October, the situation remains desperate in Puerto Rico following Hurricane Maria, and things still aren't looking good. Families remain in crisis throughout the island with little access to food, water and electricity.

Unfortunately, this situation is not unfolding in isolation. At the same time:

- More than 1,000 people have died from flooding in Nepal and India, which has also washed away crops many poor families depend on to survive.
- Several nations in Africa including South Sudan, which is mired in conflict, are teetering on the brink of famine.
- Conflict in the Middle East—particularly in Iraq and Syria—has created a refugee crisis of epic proportions. In fact, a colleague with more than 20 years in humanitarian response just visited Iraq and says the destruction there is the worst he's ever seen.

Friends like you are helping to respond to all of these situations—including in Puerto Rico—but we need to do more. In a world of crisis let's do a world of good.

Donations can be sent to: Lutheran World Relief, P.O. Box 17061, Baltimore, MD 21297-1061

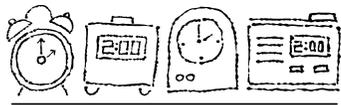
To My Dear Church Family,

"Thank you for the love and support during the difficult days of Harry's illness and passing. I felt your prayers every day. Kevin, Mike and Dave and their families also thank you with all their hearts. We also want to express our thanks to the women of the church for helping with the luncheon. Everything was delicious. May God bless you all every day. 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.' Psalm 46:1 It's true!"

Love you all, Mona and family

Membership Updates, Concerns and Thanks

Thanks to Ted for installing new light bulbs in hard-to-reach places and caulking balcony window.



The graphic shows four icons: an alarm clock, a digital clock displaying 2:00, an analog clock, and another digital clock displaying 2:00. Below the icons, the text reads "DAYLIGHT-SAVING TIME ENDS".

**November 5
2 A.M.**

November Confirmation Schedule:

November 5 5:00 p.m. First Lutheran
November 15 6:00 p.m. Grace Place
Campus Ministry meal

DEEPEST SYMPATHY goes out to Mona and family on the death of Harry. Funeral services were held on October 18.

Here at Bethlehem we have a special group of angels who, when with willing hearts, always answer to the call for food for our funeral lunches. God bless each and every one of you. As Jesus said, "When you did it for the least of these, you did it for me." With Grateful Hearts, Betty & Elmie
P.S. Anyone wishing to join this group, please contact Elmie or Betty.



CONGRATULATIONS to Tom and Anthony on their Confirmation October 22, 2017.

Consider donating your winter gloves, mittens, and warm coats to our Food Pantry. We could also use your clean plastic shopping bags!

**ANNUAL MEETING—PART I
COMING UP IN DECEMBER —DATE TBA
Watch your bulletins & newsletters for reminders.**

**Happy Thanksgiving to all!
Offices &
Food Pantry closed
Thursday, November 23**

CONDOLENCES to Carl & Kelsey on the recent death of Carl's father, Dennis.

Home communion is always available to those who cannot attend church regularly. Please contact for more information.

Sympathy to Marilyn & family on the recent death of her sister, Arlene (Saari) P., in North Olmstead, Ohio.

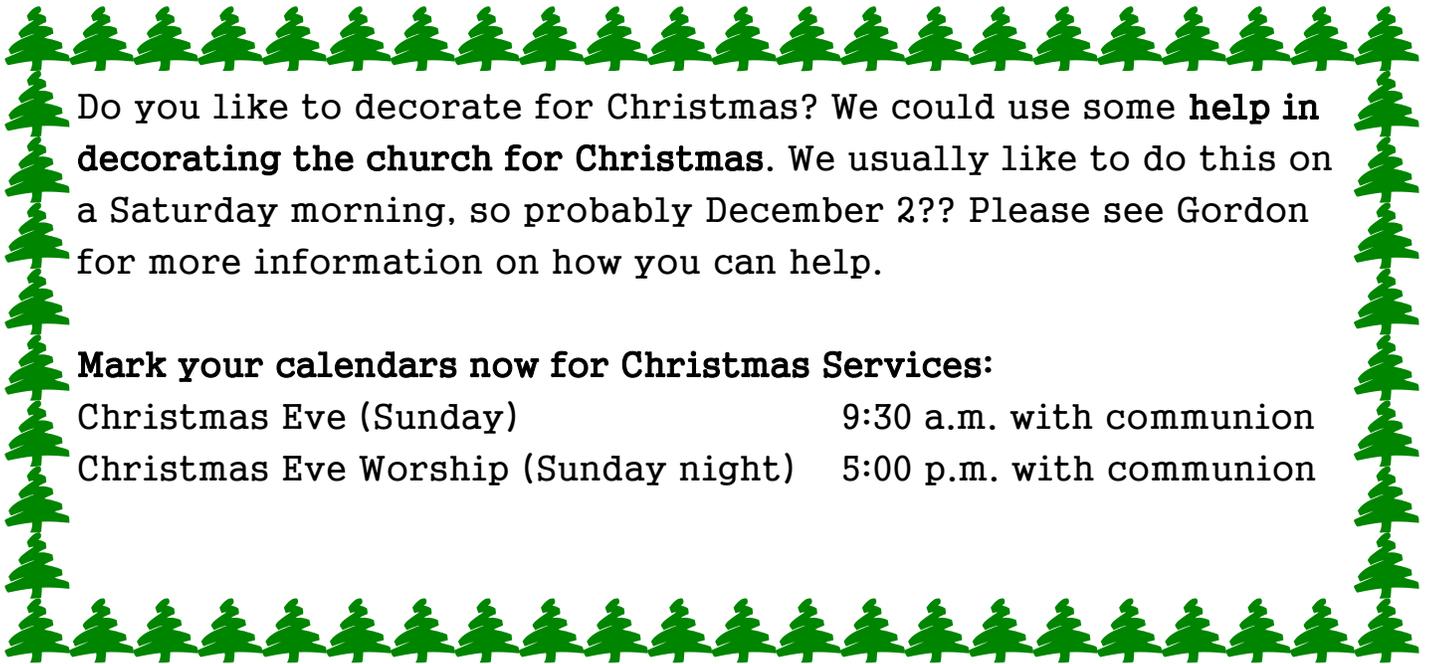
Do you know members who cannot attend church but would like a weekly bulletin? Let the office know and we will mail one to them each week.

PANTRY STATS FOR SEPTEMBER:

Households served: 500
Individuals served: 1,645
Children under 18: 505

Judy and Elmie are available to start a **Prayer Chain** for you or your loved ones when the need arises.

Hanging of the Greens



Do you like to decorate for Christmas? We could use some **help in decorating the church for Christmas**. We usually like to do this on a Saturday morning, so probably December 2?? Please see Gordon for more information on how you can help.

Mark your calendars now for Christmas Services:

Christmas Eve (Sunday) 9:30 a.m. with communion

Christmas Eve Worship (Sunday night) 5:00 p.m. with communion



JOIN US IN GIVING THANKS . . .

PRAYER, PRAISE & PIE

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE (followed by a Pie Social)

COFFEE & PIE PROVIDED!!

NOVEMBER 22 1:00 P.M.

Now you have time to give thanks to God with us before the family arrives. Join us at 1:00 p.m. for our Thanksgiving Eve Worship followed by pumpkin pie in the Fellowship Hall afterward.



Thanksgiving Boxes for Food Pantry



**We are part of the way there!
Your help can make a difference!**

**Please help us with our
Annual Holiday Meal Boxes!**

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



Thanksgiving
D I N N E R S



Thanksgiving
D I N N E R S

The Northern Illinois Food Bank is 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 \$16. We had to order early, so write your check for the Food Pantry soon.

We have ordered 100 boxes for our Food Pantry clients this year so your generous donations would be greatly appreciated. *Make your checks payable to Bethlehem and note that it is for the Thanksgiving boxes.* Thank you for your continued support!

Name _____

of boxes at \$16 each _____



Send a Christmas Card to a Homebound Member



Please see office for names and addresses!

Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER FORM 2017

Remember a loved one and help to make the Sanctuary beautiful for our Christmas Eve Service! To order your plant, please complete this form and give to an usher; place in the offering plate, or leave in the church office no later than **Sunday, December 10**. Please make your check payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church and include with your plant order.

_____ plant(s) @ \$13.00 each



Name of Donor _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

I will take plant(s) home after Christmas Eve services

I will share my plant(s) with a shut-in.

Ways to Help with Christmas at DeKalb Co. Rehab

You can support them this year by purchasing a gift for a special resident or with a monetary donation that will be used to purchase beauty shop gift certificates from our in-house salon or Peddlers Shop gift certificates. The money is put right into the client's own personal account, in our business office, marked for getting their hair done or gift shop sales.

If you would like to have the name or names of a special resident, please let the office know and they will send you a list of names and needs. If you choose a gift of clothing, we will send needs and sizes. If you would like to donate something other than the certificates or clothing, residents can use gripper socks, large print books, blankets, shawls, life-like baby dolls, small stuffed animals, nice smelling lotions, mp3 players with music uploaded, pens, and wheelchair or walker cad-dies (bags).

Donations must be to DeKalb Co. Rehab & Nursing by December 20 so that they can organize and be sure that everyone is remembered!

Gifts will be delivered on Friday, December 22, during our Holiday Festivities 2-4 p.m. You are invited to greet your resident and deliver your gift during this time.

If you have any questions or are interested in helping to make the Christmas Season special for our residents, please call Jennifer, Community Life Director, (815) 217-0344 or jhgiannini@dekalbcounty.org.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Star Seminarian

It's almost the Season . . . !

It's time to start thinking about supporting the **Star Seminarian** project at BELC. This fund was established to support seminary students who are studying for pastoral ministry. Your donations will be greatly appreciated and as an added bonus your name will appear in the December *Star* with special Christmas Greetings to the congregation.

